

A MODEL FOR HEALING AND RESTORATION
FROM THE PAIN OF AN
OUTCAST

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ABSTRACT

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This ministry project was implemented at the Shiloh Baptist Church of Baltimore County in Baltimore Maryland. The problem facing this congregation is the unacknowledged pain they have experienced which continues to affect their lives and sometime impacts ministry. This project was to assist members with acknowledging their pain, and moving forward to healing and restoration. A qualitative methodology was used in this study. To measure its effectiveness a triangular process of gathering data for analysis was in the form of a questionnaire, individual interviews and observations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you Jesus!

When I look back through my journey of this Doctor of Ministry project it is with gratitude I have been able to complete this project and it is only through the help of the Holy Spirit. As I entered this University I was not sure what was ahead nor what I would experience as I travel toward graduation, however this has been the most profound experience of my life because it has shown me, me. There were some difficult moments and stressful, hair pulling moments, yet if it had not been for the Lord on my side I would not have been able to complete this project.

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I would like to thank my father Bishop Henry Thornes, deceased, for being a man of strength and power who felt the call of God upon his life despite obstacles and verbal accusations moved forward in ministry and fifty-one years later the church remains alive and well. To my mother Harriett Evelyn Thornes, now ninety-one years old, thank you for showing me how to continue to push forward to complete the assignment God has ordained for my life despite the challenges of ministry. To my pastor Bishop Heber M.

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Finally, but definitely not the least I want to thank God for allowing me to find purpose and meaning in this experience which may help others to acknowledge their pain, and move forward in healing and restoration.

“Pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures speaks in our consciences but shouts in our pains. It is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world.

—C. S. Lewis

INTRODUCTION

Many times ministry to others “trigger” feelings and emotions that are difficult to understand for a myriad of reasons. These reasons may include:

- Total unfamiliarity with the individuals’ circumstances,
- A profound response to a seemingly benign admission,
- A feeling of emotional loss when one does not come to mind,
- A sense that more is going on than meets the eye.

It is in times like this that the persons assisting calls to mind those emotions that have been plaguing them for a number of years and they cannot understand what is going on. Could it be that their own church hurt, injury by family and friends, or other occurrence has clouded their view of this instance?

After years of ministry these questions were brought to the forefront of this researcher’s mind and she sought to clarify those feelings – in herself and others – through the research and investigation continued in this work. It became apparent that the efficacy of service to others can be compromised, if not totally dissatisfied by misdirected feelings of hurt that have not been acknowledged in the person seeking to assist another person in dealing with their problems.

The outgrowth of my deliberations at the conclusion of the Spiritual Autobiography resulted in the work before you. I do not consider this a complete or

comprehensive project because all the research has resulted in opening up a pathway to my healing. In this regard, it has also prompted questions on “Why others respond as they do?” and “How can ministry become a vehicle for healing the one serving others?” and “How can a person in the congregation who has been hurt by the church, family and/or friends be assisted in finding a pathway to personal healing and restoration for themselves and others?”

This research invites the reader to approach this work as (1) a stepping stone to their personal investigation into their individual circumstance, and (2) an affirmation that God who knows our end from our beginning and who has begun a good work in us – is going to empower us to gain victory in this world that will foster a path of healing.

This exploration was very enlightening for this researcher and has enabled me to resolve personal issues while documenting a model to assist others in their attempt to acknowledge their pain and to identify the persons(s) who hurt them. With this information persons will be able to recognize the issues involved and begin to receive healing. Restoration could result from the completion of the healing process, and the pain of the outcast will be a memory.

The intention of this project is to help people in the Shiloh Baptist Church of Baltimore County acknowledge their pain and move forward to healing and restoration. However, this project may be duplicated in other churches with the same purpose in mind, to help people who are hurting and feeling like they are all alone and that no one cares to acknowledge this pain either verbally, through journal writing and counseling. It is the researcher’s desire that people are made whole and live an abundant life.

The scripture references used for this project are Genesis 16:5-11 and Acts 15:36-41.

Chapter one. Ministry Focus shows us how you may be impacted with the pain of a hurtful interaction with church and family members and sometimes friends yet there is research which helps us to find hope.

Chapter two. Biblical Foundation will lay a biblical framework using an Old and New Testament scripture to support and give strength to the project.

Chapter three. Historical Foundation will provide historical documentation of persons who have been hurt by church members and in society, they will allow us to see how their dealt with the pain in their lives.

Chapter four. Theological Foundation we will learn from other theologians and scholars to understanding how pain goes unnoticed and unrecognized by the persons who has been hurt then find information to help with moving past the pain to healing.

Chapter five. Theoretical Foundation will discover other models used to address why persons may be unable to acknowledge their pain.

Chapter six. In conclusion, a Project Analysis Project will review all the data gain from the foundation research and implement a project with the desire of making a difference in the Shiloh Family. The project will use a qualitative method to collect, analyze, and evaluate the data collected. Finally there will be a summary and a conclusion of what the researcher feels brought significance to this project.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

Introduction

As I look back over my life, I see how God has orchestrated my upbringing and my experiences to enable me to have compassion and empathy for persons who are experiencing pain as a result of hurt caused by church members, a family member or friend. Developing this project has enabled me to acknowledge events that provided the impetus for personal misidentified hurt. I was able to recognize the source of the pain and objectively analyze it for the purpose of developing the proper response. The analysis, as outlined in this work, was used to formulate the model for this project. It is possible for a person to show empathy for someone who is hurting which can be a beneficial step in the healing process. However, if the person has not fully experienced the pain of hurt it is almost impossible to move the injured party forward beyond tears. If you can personally understand the depth of the pain, you can assist in identifying the source of the hurt and can effectively lead the person through the healing process. To effectively lead a person through the healing process, it is not essential that your experiences have to be similar. What is important is that the essence of that pain be understood as you approach, listen to and counsel the individual. I now see that God has used the events of my upbringing to equip me for the ministry to which He has called me.

Focus and Context

My father was a pastor and my mom, who is currently ninety-one years of age, was a caring and compassionate missionary in her younger days. On many occasions my siblings and I would witness our parents leaving home to care for church members in need of prayer, counseling, and assistance. Sometimes it would be just hand-holding during difficult times in the lives of members. Family members might call my parents for financial support or a domestic situation. Friends or neighbors would reach out because they knew that regardless of their situation or circumstance, my parents would support them in some constructive way. Through their efforts, my father and mother always showed their children and community that caring for a brother or sister (whether a believer or non-believer) is what God requires of us.

My experiences in the church with family and friends periodically caused me to be detached, rejected and feel like an outsider because of the pain resulting from my interactions with them. All of this came to the forefront when I began to write my spiritual autobiography. I did not know that such pain was resident inside of me – a preacher, a woman of God, a church leader, a mother, a sister and a friend. After deeply examining my past, I realized that attention must be given to those who have become outcasts in church, with their families and friends.

There have been several experiences in my life which made me feel isolated and deserted. There were times when I felt like I was on the outside looking in, wondering how this happened. I also wondered why the pain hurt so badly leaving me to feel like an outcast. The primary question became, “I am God’s child; how could this happen?” This led to another question, “Am I alone, or are others experiencing the same thing?” I was

convinced that additional delving into these questions would yield possible strategies for me and also answers to help others who might be seeking healing as well. In addition to my personal pain, scripture provides examples of persons who became outcast as well. Being a Christian does not exempt a person from pain and hurt. Even with the assurance that God will never leave us or forsake us, people can still inflict pain and hurt on others.

My initial hurt began when my family left our home church when I was eleven years old to be with my father and mother who founded a new ministry. Initially, everyone was excited about this new move. However, a short while later we experienced verbal abuse from those trying stop us and discourage us. The pain caused by this attack was hard for me to comprehend and process at such an early age. I now realize that up until that point, I had never experienced hurt like that before. I had always trusted the adults in my life. However, I found myself confused because of the hatred that I witnessed; hatred that even came from people in the pulpit whom I previously trusted. It was so distressing that I buried those feelings for years. My reactions regarding the persons who hurt us were displayed in behavior that became openly defiant and angry towards them. We received a warm and apparently genuine send-off. However, those same people then turned around and wounded us. It hurt even more because some of these people were our mentors who we trusted and who were supposed to love us. This was the beginning of a difficult period in my life. This event caused me to withdraw and feel like an outcast. I felt like I had no support and no encouragement. In addition, I continually remembered and rehearsed the words which had caused such deep pain. These experiences motivated my family to work very hard in order to make the new

ministry a success. As a family, we did not talk about the hurt that each of us felt which made it more difficult for any healing to take place.

I do not remember there being any support given to my family from our home church or from the pastor of our home church. My father had worked, worshipped and raised his family in that church for many years. Yet, when he started his own ministry he was rejected and abandoned by the pastor who he had always trusted and admired.

After leaving our home church, my family experienced rejection, verbal abuse, and even disrespect. The feelings of anger that stirred in me, even at eleven years of age, led me to question the true connections of a church family. The home church family questioned my dad's intentions, even though only days earlier they had applauded the new direction in which God was leading him. Remembering this time in our lives helps me to sympathize with the plight of persons whose experiences have wounded them.

Not being able to worship with the church families that I had grown up with was sometimes very confusing, devastating and lonely. I now realize that the backlash and behaviors we were experiencing not only detached us from the pastor, but also from some of the families with whom we had spent so much time for many years. We had dinners with them either in their homes or ours. We took church trips together and even had church functions where the children would play and the families would fellowship together. After my father started his new ministry, these same families stopped interacting with us. Although it was difficult no longer having friendships from our home church, nothing stopped the plan of God for our lives. Our new church and our family's forward momentum persisted despite none of us ever acknowledging to each other, even then, any pain we felt regarding what was happening to us. My dad continued to press on

doing the work of ministry. As PK's (preacher's kids), throughout our childhood, we never addressed what was happening as a family. I personally felt the harmful lingering effect of being detached from my home church. As a result, there were times that our new church experience felt awkward since we were in a new building and new people were joining the church. Nevertheless, we continued to work while endeavoring to build this new congregation of Christians to minister to the people of God and to build up the kingdom of God. While it took some time, we were ultimately successful in building new family connections in our new church.

The hurt we experienced from my original home church had a far more reaching effect. It caused us as a family to feel like outsiders even within the wider church community. Not long after our move we were invited to worship at a particular church but when we arrived we were informed they were not having service that evening. The pastor of that church was not there when we got there but made sure someone was there to tell us that we had the wrong information. It would be an understatement to say that this fueled my anger, yet my dad simply stated, "I must have made a mistake, I apologize." We left that church as a congregation knowing that there had been no mistake. However, this pastor was friends with our previous pastor. This episode caused us to feel very uncomfortable in the Christian community of our city. We had not done anything wrong. We simply obeyed God by starting a ministry as God instructed my father to do. Now, it seemed like we were being rejected and ostracized by the larger Christian community. We relied on each other as individuals and as a church family, tacitly avoiding any discussion of the suffering that seemed to plague our fledgling congregation.

It's easy to recognize in hindsight how the anger and the behavioral displays of my past link to the detachment my family experienced from the rejection of our home church. There were moments of rebellion, displays of anger, disrespect of elders, and use of inappropriate language. As I look back today, it seems as if a sacred trust was broken and all the connections we knew were cut off by a man who was possibly upset or even frightened by our family moving to another church. To this day, I am not completely sure why we were treated the way we were. However, I do know that everything is in God's hands and that is why we continued to press forward as a family. I am glad to say that after years of not feeling connected to my home church and the families there, God eventually provided an opportunity for us to reconnect and be reconciled. To my knowledge, the pastor of my home church never spoke to my father again nor did he ever ask for forgiveness for what he had done. We were pleasantly surprised at my dad's funeral when this same pastor stood up and began to share words of honor about how he felt about my father and how he respected and appreciated the ministry and the man that my father had been. My mother, siblings, and church family were able to hear what we felt was an apology, and we were able to forgive.

As Christians, when we look at our total life experiences, we may wonder why God allowed some people into our lives. There's nothing wrong with reflecting on the issues of the past because it enables one to see how their life has progressed. You can see how the good and bad experiences of life help to make you into the mature person that God always intended you to be. Even while dealing with the trauma of separation from our home church, I found something to be grateful for. I was grateful for an elderly woman who came into our lives after her husband died leaving her without a family and a

home that she could call her own. God showed me how this elderly woman could be accepted into our home and into our hearts even while we dealt with rejection on another level. Over time, this display of love and care and connection made it possible for me to see the validity of scripture declares that “your latter days may become your better days.”

In the seventies, a few years after our family initially left our home church, a couple who had been members of our home church left there and became members of our new church. After a while, the husband died, leaving the wife with no connections—they had no children or extended family, and no home. My parents asked her to come to our home and live with us until after the funeral. Here again my parents consistently continued to demonstrate that ministry reaches beyond the church doors and into the lives and hearts of the community and the world around them. This lady had no family of her own to support her during this time of bereavement. Days stretched into weeks, and weeks into months into years, and somehow we found that this senior citizen had become a part of our family. She fit right into an empty space in our family that we did not even know there was. She became my adopted grandmother. She stayed with us for almost thirty years becoming an intricate part of our family. My mother and father called her Mother and we called her Grandma. After she had lived with us for several years, we officially drew up papers and adopted her. This act of love provided my grandmother stability and a permanent place of refuge for the rest of her life. When it looked like she was going to be all alone in this world without her husband, she found a new family in her pastor’s home. She would often say, “I did not know what I was going to do, I was all alone.” My grandmother meant a lot to our family, and we made sure she had the support of a loving family for her the rest of her life.

This relationship proved to our family that even when you feel like an outcast yourself, you can offer a healing connection to someone else. God can cause your own suffering to birth a new capacity for comforting others in you. Allowing my grandmother to enter our home and our hearts was a testament to my parent's ability to trust and flow with God's plan for our family. This enabled us all to see how we could embrace someone who needed to know they belonged. Even though my parents may have felt ostracized from their home church family, they were able to embrace a woman and allow her to know care, comfort, love, stability, joy and family for the rest of her life. My grandmother passed away at the age of eighty-nine years old.

All of these impressions come together in me and reinforce an internal passion to be a conduit of God's love to persons who feel they have been abandoned in their own lives. This includes persons who have felt the pain of separation, divorce, or death in their families. I thank God for being a part of a family who did not shy away from an opportunity to open their home to persons who needed a place of refuge, and a place of love and safety.

In order to properly facilitate the process of healing from one's own hurtful experience while being transparent, this project will delve into the origins of the outcast experience. My own experiences as an adult also inform my understanding of what it means to be an outcast. I was a woman with two children living with a drug-addicted husband. I was scared to leave and more afraid to stay. Through my story I pray someone else will be able to find the strength and courage to pick up the pieces of their lives and move forward as I have.

During the 1980's another painful situation occurred in my life. After almost sixteen years of marriage, I separated from my husband. The verbal abuse from my husband combined with the strain of discovering and dealing with his addiction became too much for me to endure. In addition, I had to manage our fiscal affairs and every other responsibility included in raising a family. There were times when I wondered if I could make it through this without losing mind, home and/or children. In those days a "preacher's kid" going through a divorce put a stigma on the whole family. My parents felt that if we received counseling we would be able to make it work. The belief was all we had to do was hold on to the Word of God and we would make it through this storm. For many years I kept the harsh reality of my home life from my extended family, the church and even some friends. By the time I actually left, I had no choice but to take my children and run for my life. In that aftermath, going to church Sunday after Sunday became a struggle because of the weight of all the eyes on me. As praise and worship leader, I was under much scrutiny from the congregation. The biggest issue was not that I was separated. In some people's estimation, the fact that I was the preacher's daughter meant I must have done something wrong to not be able to keep my marriage and family together. I would often be quoted scriptures by mothers in the congregation whose own children may have experienced separation and even had children out of wedlock. Dealing with that in addition to the other issues I had in life eventually took its toll on me. Thankfully one of my friends said to me "Hold your head up high, they don't have any idea." It took a while but one day I began to walk with pride again even though my heart was hurting from the separation and from my interaction with church members. God

made it better over time and while they may have continued to talk, I learned how to simply ignore them.

Though we were separated, my husband would not leave the residence. Through mental abuse he still exerted control over my life and my ability to think clearly. I had two options: to stay or to leave. Both might sound easy but when you are in the midst of a frightening situation reaching out to others can be difficult. There are times when fear will make you feel you are beyond help, even though you are saved, sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost.

One day after my husband went to work, I left my home with my children. I moved into an apartment with my children in order to restructure my family. I wanted a partnership with my husband so that he could continue to be a part of my children's lives. However, he refused to go along with the plan and decided to work against me rather than with me. Today as I look back in hindsight, I realize that he would not have been a healthy influence in our children's lives. I realize that the hand of God was still working in my life. On one hand I still felt isolated while being surrounded by family and friends. On the other hand, I knew that God was with me and my children.

In May of 1998, two years after my father passed away, there was another difficult time of struggle for both my family and the church. My father was an integral part of our lives and a sorely missed stabilizing force. That month, God moved me from the church that my father had founded to my current place of worship, the Shiloh Baptist Church of Baltimore County. The reaction from the family and from members of our church was difficult and sometimes abusive. Member from my new church even seemed suspicious of my motives for joining despite my having been visiting for many years. It

seemed as if things were coming from every direction to make worship challenging. It led me to wonder, “God, what are You doing? Here we go again, another rumble with my church and family members.” Leaving the Pentecostal church to worship with a Baptist church brought harsh words from preachers, church members and family members questioning my decision. While I did not completely understand what was going on, I did know how to follow the Lord’s leading. I informed the doubters and naysayers that it was a God thing and I had to do what God was directing me to do. My children resisted worshipping with me at the new church because as teenagers they were fully immersed into and connected with our family church. Since I had no desire to cause them the same pain I had when leaving my childhood home church, I let them continue at my home church with our family and members of the congregation with which they had grown up. I sat for months in this new church with new faces feeling isolated and deserted and wondering why I was there.

Conclusion

While each person’s experiences may be unique, there are persons sitting in churches today who have been hurt by church members. There are people who have also been placed in awkward positions which made it difficult to be a part of the church. For some it let them to feel like an outcast. Sarah Cunningham in her book, *Beyond the Broken Church: How to Leave Church Problems Behind Without Leaving the Church*, says “Almost everyone, it seems, has a story to tell about some painful or disastrous encounter with the church. And that ache manifests itself in different ways. Some abandon the church scene to run for what they deem more gracious or authentic hills,

while others quietly swallow weekly helpings of resentment from the front row or even from the stage of the church sanctuary.”¹ It is not my goal to bash the church. The church is where I spent most of my life. However, as with most hallmarks of life, the place where one has been made most-happy can also be the place where one experiences the greatest hurts. It is for this reason that I endeavor to help others acknowledge that pain and ultimately be healed from that hurt. I believe that through research and workshops persons can diagnose and correctly identify the source of their pain. This will enable them to move forward towards healing and restoration.

Journeying through this project enables one to see the significance of communication in finding the power from God’s Word to testify to one’s own pain in order to turn pain into a mechanism for showcasing God’s healing power. When speaking to persons who have been hurt, one must be sensitive to their pain in order to help them get back on their feet and move forward in life. This pain does not just impact the primary circle, i.e. the mother and father, it also affects children and extended family. Everyone affected needs to be part of the overall healing process.

Parents must understand that the pain that they may be experiencing can sometimes be shaken off. They may even just move forward in their daily lives - not really living but just coping. Children, on the other hand, may hold on to their pain longer not being able to verbalize what and how they are feeling. The experiences of my life are a prime example of this. It took writing my spiritual autobiography to recognize the pain which I had buried years ago. By acknowledging that pain I began to move toward being made whole. With intentional communication, the total family may be able to avoid the

¹ Sarah Cunningham, *Beyond the Broken Church How to Leave Church Problems Behind Without Leaving the Church* (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI), 2006.

marital strife, behavioral acting out by the children and possible separation as a family unit.

When there is pain experienced by members of the family and that hurt is not dealt with responsibly, other issues such as alcoholic abuse, drug addiction, schisms or death in the family may have a destructive impact on parents and children. As such, it becomes imperative to delve into how children feel about what they have seen or experienced. If adults find it hard to gather this information, then seeking professional assistance is a must. It may be understandable that a parent would want to move forward to make life feel normal again after a difficult situation arises, or make it go away. However, at times children may feel a lingering detachment from familiar surroundings or support systems so it is necessary for parents to be aware of the behaviors which speak to possible problems. It is essential that adults address the situation through conversation with the entire family so that the feelings of anger and acting out may be dealt with internally before they begin to be displayed in the children's behavior and interactions with others.

Parents may feel a need to discipline their children without really understanding why the child is acting out. Returning to a "normal" life style may be more difficult for the child than for the parents. This is assuming that the parents have, in fact, dealt with the effects of the underlying situation. Although adults may experience peer pressure, there are times when they can ignore it and progress, whereas children with a need to belong may not be as resilient or willing to move on. That is why it is so important for us to be in tune with our family structure in order to assure everyone is being nurtured and encouraged to be all God wants them to be in spite of life's situations and circumstances.

In retrospect, I am not certain this is what happened for me. Without discussion, intervention or resolution for the pain I experienced early in life, I found that as I grew into a young adult there was a need to find validation, connection and acceptance in people and places, which except for the grace of God could have caused me physical pain or even death.

This experience in my life has moved me to have compassion and empathy for those families who seem not to have a support system from their churches, individual families and friends. A support system may not be available because of the choices they have made, which may have seemed good at the time but did not pan out. There are choices we make for our own gratification and then there are the decisions we make for ministry. When you make a choice for your own gratification, it is up to you to acquire the tools necessary to complete the assignment at hand. While this may not always mean it was a bad decision, it often means sometimes you must bear the consequences of the choice you make. Families and friends may or may not be there to support you either because they do not agree with the choice you have made or they find no personal benefits for themselves in your choices. Standing alone may cause you not to put your best foot forward in whatever assignment you have chosen. However, even then we must understand that there are significant benefits and consequences to every choice we make. There are times you will have to stand alone. But trust that whether benefit or consequence, a life lesson will be learned which you may use for future endeavors.

It is best to make decisions which are guided by God. While you still may feel detached from your support system, you will have the help of God who knows the beginning from the end, and promised never to leave you or forsake you. I encourage you

to continue to follow the Lord's leading. Psalms 37:23 reads, "the steps of a good man/woman are ordered by the Lord." Life's experiences can help us grow in our skills and abilities and in our faith in the God who brought us through. We should then take that experience and help someone else who may be experiencing a painful situation themselves. Today as I look back I can see every one of my experiences propelled me towards my purpose in ministry. Remembering what loneliness and detachment felt like allows me to be empathetic to those persons who may feel detached from their families and friends. I am now able to show compassion and not judgment; empathy and not pity; love and not rejection.

As I minister to the church in my current context, I want everyone to find the hand of God in their experience, no matter how difficult that may be or how much pain or detachment they may have experienced. Isaiah 41:10 says "Fear not for I am with you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand². It has become my charge and honor to not just talk about God to the people but to show them the God in me and most of all the God in them. I want to be a mouthpiece of what God can do in our lives, regardless of our past experiences and circumstances. If we look to the hills from whence cometh our help, we will see life at a different level. Prayerfully as we lift our eyes to the hills, our focus will be to get up and move beyond the pain and effects of our situations and circumstances in order to receive God's promises for us.

The church Body must become aware that we all must be open to where the Lord is leading us. Our life's experiences play a significant role in making us who God wants us to be. There will be times when we must provide financial assistance, tutoring,

²Isa. 41:10 (NKJV)

teaching, and mentoring to help people see how God can use anyone to further the kingdom agenda. Ministers of God must also know when additional assistance is needed outside of the realm of the church and use the services of professional agencies if needed. As members of the congregation begin to come to me in order to start this journey from a place of hurt to wholeness, I must continue to prepare myself so that God can use me as an instrument of restoration. I realize that this journey I have begun to help persons in my congregation and beyond requires trust, personal integrity and confidentiality.

When I reflect on my life experiences, I kept a lot of what I was experiencing to myself because I was a “preacher’s kid” which at times felt like a form of bondage. Now, I want to help persons not to place limits on themselves or allow others to place labels on them which can inhibit their growth and development. It was when I reached out to others that true freedom became a reality for me and I could finally see hope on the horizon. My goal is to provide that same hope to others who have been hurt by church members, by family members and friends. That support may have to be referred to a counseling agency or a facility which is equipped to meet the needs of the individual. However, the ultimate goal is to bring about healing and restoration to those who need it.

Today I am thankful that my ex-husband and I are able to parent our grown children and nurture our grandchildren together. It was difficult working through all the pain of the past but today we are able to experience wholeness. God did not cause the problems in my marriage but I am glad He helped us to work through them to be a blessing and provide hope to others. Today my ex-husband is also working in the same type of ministry in his home town in North Carolina.

As I have reflected on my life experiences, I have felt emotions I was not aware were still active as well as feelings of joy and despair. This is why I am able at this time to have a clear perspective of what God has called me to do. When I began my ministerial journey, I thought I would be an associate minister who would care for the congregation however the pastor saw fit. I have found myself caring for persons who are hurting and seem not to be able to find healing inside and outside of the church. I see myself with a desire to see all people doing what they have been called by God to do in the church, in their families and for their friends with compassion and joy. I know this can only come after those persons who are hurting have been able to identify their pain and begin to move forward. I find myself wanting to be the conduit that God uses to provide resources, education, and hope for a better life to others.

As I continue this journey with the focus of serving those in need, I look forward to assisting hurting people in their efforts to identify and uncover the hurt so that God can perfect their healing.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

Throughout the course of history persons who have experienced the reality of being an outcast have needed to be healed and restored from their pain. The freedictionary.com tells us that pain is more than a sensation, or the physical awareness of pain, it also includes perception, the subjective interpretation of the discomfort.¹

Through this Biblical Foundation, the Old and New Testament scriptures will show examples of people who have experienced the pain of being an outcast. For instance in Exodus 2:23-25 we hear the cries of the Hebrews who experienced pain physically and emotionally and were placed on the outside of the city to live in poverty and isolation. In Genesis 29:23, Leah married a man who loved her sister more than he loved her, which caused Leah to suffer pain as an outcast.

In Luke 5:12-16 there is a man who suffers with leprosy is unable to have contact with others, and is forced to live in isolation outside the city. In John 8:1-11 there is a woman who was caught in adultery and brought to Jesus by a crowd of men; with no one to stand in her defense. In Mark 14:66-72 Jesus was on trial and Peter in the courtyard denying Him.

¹ The Free Dictionary By Farlex, accessed April 23, 2016, <http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Pain>.

Although these prior biblical references include instances of being an outcast, the Old and New Testament will focus on specific instances of being an outcast. First, attention will be directed to the Old Testament text of Genesis 16:5-11. In the text pain is experienced by Hagar. Hagar is instructed to bear a child for Abram and Sarai and the consequences thereof caused Hagar to experience pain and find herself as an outcast.

Next, attention is directed to the New Testament text of Acts 15:36-41 where John Mark is rejected by Paul who desires to participate in a missionary journey. The request was discussed by Paul and Barnabas and Paul rejected the request. This rejection by Paul to Barnabas, caused John Mark feelings of mistreatment, hurt and disappointment; hence resulting in John Mark enduring the pain as an outcast.

The circumstances and events summarized in the Old and New Testament are similar to the pain and suffering endured by persons in the modern day church today. This pain causes some to be placed in positions of isolation, to be misunderstood, and to ultimately become outcasts. The goal of this Biblical Foundation is to serve as the foundation in helping church members address their own pain and hurts from living as outcasts within the church among family and among friends. Based on the teachings from the Old and New Testaments, methods can be considered that will bring healing and restoration to the outcast.

The goal will be accomplished through the introduction, as well as an exegetical study and analysis of the selected text in the Old and New Testaments. The exegesis will draw upon the documented research, writings and commentaries of life-long theologians who are recognized as authorities on those biblical texts.

In addition, the researcher will provide a summary of the project that includes a thorough review and various aspects relating to the subject, as well as recommended methods for healing and restoration.

Old Testament

The Old Testament foundation comes from Genesis 16:5-11.

“Then Sarai said to Abram, “My wrong be upon you! I gave my maid into your embrace; and when she saw that she had conceived, I became despised in her eyes. “The Lord judge between you and me.” So Abram said to Sarai, “Indeed your maid is in your hand; do to her as you please.” And when Sarai dealt harshly with her, she fled from her presence. Now the Angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur. And He said, “Hagar, Sarai’s maid, where have you come from and where are you going?” She said, “I am fleeing from the present of my mistress Sarai.” The Angel of the Lord said to her, “Return to your mistress and submit yourself under her hand.” Then the Angel of the Lord said to her, “I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude.” And the Angel of the Lord said to her: “Behold you are with child, And you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, Because the Lord has heard your affliction.”²

The person of focus is Hagar. As we begin to review the Old Testament text for consideration of this study, it is important to set the background and introduce the primary characters. Abraham is the first one to consider was born into the Sumerian

² Gen. 16:5-11 (NKJV)

culture, in the ancient capital of Ur, which today is called southern Iraq.³ Abraham's father, Terah, was seventy-five when God instruct him to leave his homeland and move to Canaan. There is no mention of his mother.⁴ This omission may be because they lived in a patriarchal society where women were not acknowledged as often as men. It could also be that Abraham's mother was actually absent. This possible absence of maternal influence may have impacted Abraham's interaction and relationship with Sarah and Hagar. Do we look at Abraham as a perfect and upright man in all his ways, or do we see him as a man who faced similar issues to those people face today? Abraham was not perfect and made some wrong decisions. However, he trusted God to be his constant guide and deliverer.

The principle characters are Sarai, whose name was changed to Sarah, and Hagar, her maid, who became the point of contention in Abraham and Sarah's life. Sarah and Abraham went to Egypt because of a famine. Abraham instructed Sarah to lie and say she was his sister. Consequently, Sarah was taken into Pharaoh's house as a servant because of her beauty. Abraham was given gifts of cattle and servants under this pretense. God sent a plague upon Pharaoh and his house because Sarah being Abram's wife was now in the palace as the king's possession. The text does not tell us that God or anyone spoke to Pharaoh; nonetheless, Pharaoh sent for Abraham confronting him about his relationship to Sarai. There is not clear evidence how the relationship was revealed only Pharaoh's emphatic response to the plague in the land. Once it was confirmed that Sarah

³ David Rosenberg, *Abraham the First Historical Biography* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2006), xi-xii.

⁴ Bruce S. Feiler, *Abraham A Journey to the Heart of Three Faiths* (New York NY: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 2002), 18.

was his wife, Abraham and Sarah were escorted out of Pharaoh's home safely.⁵ Sarah did not have children and somewhere along the journey she acquired an Egyptian maid when Abraham and Sarah travelled through Egypt.⁶

Genesis 16:3 is the first mention of Hagar. There is a possibility that Hagar was given to Abraham and Sarah to be a servant. It is not documented whether Hagar was with Sarah in the palace or if she was given to Abraham as a gift from the king when he took Sarah into the palace after they both lied. It is not clear if Hagar was given to Sarah and Abraham when he was showered with gifts when they first arrived at the palace or as they were being escorted out of the palace. It is noted, however, that this young maiden travelled from Egypt with them and became Sarah's servant.

According to the Midrash, a process of interpretation by which the rabbis filled in "gaps" in the Torah; the name "Hagar" stems from this beginning of her association with Abraham's house. It comes from "Ha-Agar," meaning this is the reward.⁷ The Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary says that Hagar's (Ha-gar) personal name means stranger.⁸ These names given to Hagar may explain why she was given to Abraham and Sarah as a "gift" or a "reward" from the king. This may also explain why she ran away later in the text as "a stranger" feeling like an "outsider" in a strange land, among an unfamiliar culture and hurtful people. Since it is not clear how or why Hagar was given to Sarah and Abraham, her name may have also identified her feelings of an "outcast." For those

⁵ Gen.12:12-20 (NKJV)

⁶ David Rosenberg, *Abraham the First Historical Biography* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2006), 12.

⁷ Nissan Mendel, Hagar, accessed April 23, 2016, http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/112053/jewish/Hagar.htm, paragraph 2 and 3.

⁸ D.M. Fleming, et. Al., *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003).

who struggle with feelings of not belonging, that same struggle can negatively affect self-esteem. No matter how insignificant the feelings of not belonging might seem, for the person who struggles with deep abandonment fears, it feels like we are left in the dark wilderness without any sign of hope or comfort.⁹

In her book, *Sarah: Mother of Nations*, Tammi Schneider explains that Sarai has an Egyptian female named Hagar and she is described as a shifchah, which means handmaid, maid or maidservant.¹⁰ Schneider goes on to say that Sarah's inability to bear children for Abraham combines with a potentially fertile slave girl at the opening of chapter sixteen, laying a foundation for a triangle that will result in coercion, distrust and disrespect.¹¹ Even though in previous chapters Abraham understood God's promise that Sarah would have a child, other options were sought when God seemed to have been late.

In both cases the women are distraught over their position in the household: Sarah is embarrassed by her barrenness, and Hagar faces the life of an outcast. "Sarah" and "Hagar" are mentioned at the beginning and the end of the verse; they are contrasted throughout the passage, Hagar functioning as a foil for Sarah. Hagar is a young slave woman and fertile; Sarah is old, free, and barren.¹² As a freeborn, Israelite matriarch, Sarai (eventually re-named Sarah) is clearly superior to Hagar, her maidservant and Abram's (eventually re-named Abraham) Egyptian concubine. But in conceiving

⁹ E. C. aMeaux, "How to Overcome the Feeling of Abandonment.3 steps to love and trust again ". Gaiamlife Your Guide to Better Living, accessed April 23, 2016, <http://life.gaiam.com/article/how-overcome-feeling-abandonment>.

¹⁰ Tammi J. Schneider, *Sarah: Mother of Nations* (New York NY: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2004), 47.

¹¹ Tammi J. Schneider, *Sarah: Mother of Nations* (New York NY: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2004), 47.

¹² K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26* (Vol. 1B). (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005), 184.

Abram's son Ishmael, Hagar (though still inferior in ethnicity as well as in social and marital statuses) surpasses Sarai on the most important factor of all: fertility.¹³ Is it possible that the feeling of an outcast which Sarah felt from God made it easy to set Hagar up to bear a child for Abraham and then blame someone else for the wrong decision she made? We look at Sarah and judge her actions even though Sarah was following the customs and proper course of action for that day.¹⁴ However in the midst of these practices a young woman's life was changed forever by an unfulfilled promise made to Abram and Sarai.

Having feelings of an outcast may cause one to evaluate and blame themselves for how they feel. Being identified as an outcast is almost never solely the fault of the one who feels like an outsider. Many times parental disagreements, misunderstandings of information interpreted, and previous conflicts which have not been resolved may lead to feeling alone and lonely. These feelings may be brought on because of the dysfunction of a relationship and/or internal struggle. Sarai gave Hagar (flight) to Abram in order to have children by her and then became angry when Hagar conceived and despised her.¹⁵ "Even though Sarai is the one who takes the initiative, we note in verse 1a, that she is 'Abram's wife' and her actions in fact prompted by the absence of children born from

¹³ Phyllis Tribble and Letty M. Russell, *Hagar, Sarah, and Their Children Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006).

¹⁴ Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11: A Commentary*. (Minneapolis, IN: Augsburg Publishing House in the USA, 1984), 7.

¹⁵ Reiner Publishing: Home of Faith Therapy, Biblical Answers for Abandonment Ishmael: A Story and Model of Abandonment (from the book Transformation), accessed April 23, 2016, <http://www.faiththerapy.org/answers-by-topic/abandonment/>.

him.”¹⁶ Self-evaluation can be a useful tool when examining decisions made. Some decisions are made because of emotional, spiritual, or physical interaction with others. Consequently, when those decisions do not turn out well, people, want to blame others instead of taking personal responsibility for the outcome.

It is evident from scripture that Sarai is speaking to Abram and blames God that He has not fulfilled His promise to give them a child. Therefore Sarai tells Abram to “go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her.”¹⁷ Noted scholar Walter Brueggeman claims that, theologically Sarai’s request reveals that she does not trust the promise.¹⁸ She apparently feels like God has abandoned her and Abram. Sarai reflects upon Genesis 12:2–3 where God tells Abram that He will make of him a great nation. She continues to remind Abram that God promised that in him shall all the families of the earth be blessed. It may be understandable why Sarai felt like an outsider by God based on her situation. Sarai was old and she knew only God could open her womb but He had not done so yet. God had spoken to Abram regarding the promise. In those days, barrenness was considered a judgment from God.¹⁹ One might conclude that Sarah did not consider all the ramifications connected with Hagar having Abram’s baby. Nor did she consider what kind of impact this would have on the promise God gave to Abraham. It would seem that her overwhelming desire to be a mother, coupled with her barrenness, caused her to feel alienated by God and an outcast in the community of faith.

¹⁶ Hemchand Gossai, *Power and Marginality in the Abraham Narrative* (Eugene, OR: Pickwood Publications, 2015), 3.

¹⁷ Gen. 16:2 (NKJV)

¹⁸ Walter Brueggeman, *Genesis Interpretation a Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Atlanta, GA: John Knox, 1982).

¹⁹ HarperCollins Publishers, *Backgrounds of Sarai’s Barrenness* (Koinonia hosted by Zondervan Academic and Friends, 2013).

For a woman in Hagar's position, the prospect of becoming pregnant by the leader of the clan was an honor, and could result in a dramatic rise in her social status. The possibility may have excited her, and she would no longer be just a slave, she would become an important concubine or secondary wife, - ...definitely a step up in the world. Eventually, she might be the mother of the tribe's leader, which would make her Queen Bee of the tribe.²⁰ It appears that Sarai's preoccupation with her own barrenness impeded her ability to consider how Abraham sleeping with Hagar would impact the promise God had spoken. There is some understanding of the property rights and social power of the women who lead the tribe. Sarai, not her husband, ruled the other tribal women and was responsible for them.²¹

This story tells us Sarai devised a plan to help God by having her maid sleep with Abram in order to give him a child which would ultimately become her child. There is no indication Sarai ever speaks directly to Hagar or speaks her name in the scriptures; Hagar is a tool to relieve Sarai's embarrassment.²² Even though Sarai is the one who initiates the plan, she never refers to Hagar by name.²³ Hagar is referred to as the "slave" to possibly remind her she is under the authority of a mistress and has no rights.

²⁰Elizabeth Fletcher, "Hagar Her Story Egyptian Slave Makes Good," accessed 4-26-2016, *Women in the Bible a historical approach*. Harper Collins Religious, 1997, <http://www.womeninthebible.net/1.2.Hagar.htm>.

²¹Elizabeth Fletcher, "Hagar Her Story Egyptian Slave Makes Good" accessed 4-26-2016, *Women in the Bible a historical approach*, Harper Collins Religious, 1997, <http://www.womeninthebible.net/1.2.Hagar.htm>.

²²K. A. Mathews. *Genesis 11:27–50:26* (Vol. 1B). (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005), 184.

²³Hemchand Gossai, *Power and Marginality in the Abraham Narrative* (Eugene, OR: Pickwood Publications, 2015), 6.

It is noteworthy to mention that the argument Sarai made was flawed because God made the promise to Abram and his wife (Sarai). She was included in the promise as the vessel through which the heir would be born. It appears that Sarai's unbelief hindered the process. It also appears that her feelings of being an outsider prompted her decision to look for an alternative method of fulfilling God's promise. Sarai may have felt abandoned and socially scorned because she had not given birth to the son that God had promised as noted in Genesis 15:2-6. She saw an opportunity to use Hagar to realize the promise which had been designed for Abraham and her (his lawful wife). Today there are people like Hagar who have been placed in a position where they feel they have no voice in their destiny even when they have received a promise from God.

Both Sarah and Hagar felt emotionally and spiritually abandoned by God and Abraham albeit for different reasons. Sarai felt abandoned because she was barren and could not conceive the promised child. Hagar felt abandoned because once she had Abram's child she and the child were exiled from the religious community and from the family who oversaw her care.

In all probability Sarai and Hagar had a relationship built on mutual respect and understanding of each other up to this point. Sarai and Abram had been out of Egypt for ten years and it appears Hagar had served Sarai for this period of time as her personal servant. It is also probable that Hagar understood Sarai's frustration and disappointment in not having a child. Hagar may have understood how not having a child after ten years would cause Sarai to feel abandoned by God and not able to completely hold on to the hope of the promise that was given to her and Abram. This must have been painful for Sarai to experience and for Hagar to see, but the decision that Sarai probably strained

their relationship. There may have been conversations between Sarai and Hagar regarding the difficulty to continue to hope in the face of what seemed like an unfulfilled promise. It may have been difficult for Sarai to look in the face of the people knowing the promise had not been fulfilled. To be barren in biblical times meant the matriarchs would lament that without offspring, they lacked stature and worth in their families.²⁴

The Bible does not say that Sarah and Abraham discussed their infertility or what they should do about it; however, there had to have been a conversation before the realization of the promise was fulfilled. In Genesis 16:4 Abraham goes into Hagar, and she conceived. After this happened the young Egyptian slave-girl despised her mistress; by haughtiness of carriage, perhaps silently conveying contempt for Sarai's sterility, or possibly assuming airs of superiority, as if, a consequence of approaching motherhood, Sarai should anticipate her displacement from the throne of Abram's love (Prov. 30:23).²⁵

The text reveals the results of Sarai's plan to have her husband sleep with her slave. What this text does not do is clearly show the root of the problem from Sarai's perspective. However, understanding the perception of barrenness in that era does give some insight. One could easily conclude that Sarai felt abandoned by God because she had not received the child which was promised. It appears Sarai was able to give up and place a wedge between her relationship with Hagar by not considering her feelings when she directed Abram to sleep with her. Sarai was the initiator of this sexual relationship between Abraham and Hagar. Claus Westermann in his book says God's bigger plan to allow Abraham to be the father of many nations could have possibly been fulfilled with

²⁴ Aviva Presser Aiden, Lament of a Barren Woman, accessed April 23, 2016, My Jewish Learning.com. Provided by American Jewish World Service, <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/lament-of-a-barren-woman/>.

²⁵ H. D. M. Spence-Jones, (Ed.). *Genesis* (London, NY: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909), 227.

Ishmael's birth.²⁶ Although Abraham heard God's covenant plan, he listened to Sarah and agreed to sleep with Hagar without objections.

When the rules of a relationship change as they did with Sarah, Abraham, and Hagar, the result is distrust and an unbalanced interaction. Trouble occurs after Hagar conceives. According to Genesis 16:4 Abraham has intercourse with Hagar, she conceives, and when she sees that she has conceived, she perpetrates some action toward her mistress.²⁷

Did Sarah trust Hagar to remain in a servant's place after sleeping with her husband? They had spent years together as servant and mistress, Hagar knew how important it was for Sarah to receive the promise from God. Yet when Hagar was able to birth her own promise, the tables were turned. Now their relationship consisted of mistrust, wrong doing, and fault finding. Blame became the conversation between Sarah and Abraham, and as a result, there was bitterness toward Hagar from Sarah. Sarah, who seems to be the initiator of this wrongdoing, initially blames God for not allowing her to get pregnant. Later she blames Abraham for conceiving this child with Hagar, as well as blaming Hagar for being pregnant. Trouble is likely to follow when people operate outside of the will of god in order to do things their own way. Those same people often then blame God and others for the trouble that ensues.

Hagar felt like an outcast and her feeling of detachment propels her to run away from her place of comfort, nurturing, and service to the wilderness with no sensitivity or concern from Sarah and Abraham. "Abram assures Sarai that she has the power to do

²⁶ Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11: A Commentary*. (Minneapolis, IN: Augsburg Publishing House in the USA, 1984).

²⁷ Gen. 16:4 (NKJV)

that which is good in her eyes.”²⁸ The text reveals the angel came to minister to Hagar outside of the town, which indicates that while Hagar was abandoned by Sarah and Abraham she was not abandoned by the God of Sarah and Abraham.

Verse 6 of the text indicates that Hagar flees from Canaan pregnant with Abraham’s child. Dr. Simon Hearn, a registered psychologist describes abandonment as a psychological disorder where the individual suffering from this illness cannot control the fear that he or she feels when faced with the idea of having to cope with life and its difficulties alone. He goes on to say that to begin healing “it takes not only the will to do so, but the support of someone close to that person who will be able to set boundaries and limits.”²⁹ Hagar did not have a physical support system; however, in her running she finds a spiritual support system which provides confirmation, peace, direction, and inclusion. Also, she sees a place to begin her healing and the restoring of her self-esteem. This support she received from God was something she could not get from Sarai and Abram.

As an oppressed person, Hagar was introduced to the God of Abraham who she could trust to ultimately meet her needs. She is treated harshly by Sarah. She is not even recognized at this time by Abraham. She has followed her mistress’s command and has conceived a child by Abraham as commanded, and now she is feeling like an outcast who is alone, rejected, mistreated, and misunderstood. She fights back for a while and then she is removed from the village and exiled to the wilderness with no plan, no financial assistance, and no moral support.

²⁸ David Rosenberg, *Abraham The First Historical Biography* (New York, NY: Basic Book, 2006), 12.

²⁹ Monica Flink, “Understanding Fear of Abandonment Recognizing and Dealing With Abandonment Issues,” accessed April 23, 2016, <http://www.lifescrpt.com/well-being/articles/u/6>.

The angel reminds Hagar in verse 11 that she is pregnant, which is not new information; however, the heavenly messenger also tells Hagar she will have a son. The angel even tells her the name of the child. The fear of abandonment was satisfied by the message of the angel. The angel assures Hagar that her affliction has been seen by the Lord. She is instructed to go back and serve Sarai with the promise that God has heard her, and she will bear a child with a promise. God proves again that He is the one who provide an opportunity for restoration in the midst of hard times.

Hagar was told by the angel to go back and serve Sarai. The angel never tells Hagar that things will be different, yet Hagar is assured that God has heard her affliction and seen her pain. After being rejected and abandoned by a trusted person, it can be hard to return to the hardship and familiarity of that relationship. However, God sometimes places people in situations and under certain leadership to teach them about own character and God's grace. God assured Hagar that He was on her side despite how she treated Sarai or how Sarai treated her. Both women learned that God does keep His promises. Hagar may not have worshipped the God of Abram before leaving Egypt; nevertheless, she learned that this God is there to support the downtrodden, the mistreated, and the outcast. It is important to be sensitive to the message and messenger of God. When God directs a person to move forward in life and ministry after being hurt, that persons should take those experiences and apply them to their journey. Those experiences of pain and hurt can serve to build characters and faith in God. Hagar demonstrates that persons who have been instrumental in your life and development may not be with you for the rest of your life. Some will recognize God's hand on your life and your potential and choose not to support you. This can cause feelings of

abandonment and being an outcast. However, just like God saw Hagar alone in the wilderness in her pain, God sees others in that same place of bewilderment, misunderstanding, and uncertainty. Hagar discovered that she could trust God when others failed her.

Hagar was not always a perfect example of a servant, yet she met with some unusual circumstances. It is not clear how she was placed with Sarai and Abram; however, we know she was moved from the king's palace to a place of a servant. Hagar was given to Abram to birth a child who would become Sarai's answer to God's promise. Because the promise had been fulfilled after ten years, Sarai and Abram detoured from the plan of God to go their own way. It appears Hagar was there to fulfill a promise and a desire of Sarai and Abram because they wanted a child for so long; however, Hagar was not the one who God promised would bear a son. The promise of God was given to Abram and Sarai.

In the process of time, Hagar obeyed the command to sleep with Abram. There is no information on how Hagar truly felt. Historically speaking it was not unusual to sleep with your mistress' husband if she could not conceive. However, Hagar knew about the promise spoken to Sarai to be the mother of many nations. Now in Hagar's mind she thinks she now has an opportunity to be the wife, and the mother of the promise spoken by God to Sarai and Abram. She may have had contrasting feelings of achievement or feelings of sadness. Ultimately, she is in the middle of a situation that she did not choose or agree to be in. She winds up feeling abandoned by Sarai and Abram. However, God comes to her at her lowest point in life and reminds her that He has heard her cries, and He sees her pain.

When Hagar initially went back to her mistress, there was a period of time when tolerance was displayed. That period of seeming peace as short-lived as Sarai began making, Hagar feel like an outside even inside the village. Sarai's bad feelings toward Hagar were probably always there, just under control after Hagar's initial return. It is not clear whether forgiveness was ever experienced between Sarai and Hagar. To reach a place of healing and restoration from those who have hurt, rejected, and abandoned you, one must come from a place of forgiveness. According to Oxford English dictionary, forgive means "give or grant," "to give up, cease to harbor (resentment, wrath)," "to give up one's resolve (to do something)," or "to give up resentment or claim to requital for, to pardon (an offence)."³⁰

As previously mentioned that feeling like an outcast may lower one's self-esteem. Forgiveness may boost self-esteem and lower a person's blood pressure and heart rate. Forgiveness also helps people sleep better at night and increases a positive change in their attitude. Forgiveness is a redemptive response to having been wronged and wounded.³¹

While the Bible does not indicate that there was ever a conversation between Hagar, Sarai, and Abram about all that happened, it would probably be beneficial to have a conversation with those persons who have caused feelings of hurt, rejection, and abandonment. Writing feelings down is another way to bring closure to the pain and healing to the heart which brings restoration. This does not mean that relationships will be restored. However, this process will allow for mutual respect between those who have wronged a person and those who have been wronged.

³⁰ Andrew Sung Park, *From Hurt to Healing A Theology of the Wounded* (Nashville TN: Abingdon Press, 2004), 83.

³¹ Denise George, *Cultivating a Forgiving Heart* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005).

This text reveals to those who have been hurt, rejected, abandoned outcasts by family, church members, and church leaders that healing is possible. A person who has experienced hardships like Hagar can ultimately move forward with life and achieve dreams and aspirations. Ultimately, people who have been hurt can move forward towards their God-ordained destiny in life. This move in the right direction is accomplished because people allow the process to mature them up in their relationship with God, thus making them sensitive to the feelings and hurts of others.

Hagar experienced a great challenge when Sarai decided to move ahead of God's plan. Because of Sarai's plan, Hagar was hurt, disrespected, and abused. God kept His promise even when Sarai and Abram tried to circumvent His will.

Not everyone agrees with my perspective regarding Abram, Sarai and Hagar. It is my findings from research and reading the scripture Hagar was the victim in this experiences. It appears Abram and Sarai needed to be reprimanded for their treatment of Hagar. Whereas, Howard Stigers in his commentary "When Women Wear the Pants (Genesis 16:1-16) finds all of the characters of this story are at fault for committing sin. He says "Each of the three: Sarai, Abram, and Hagar, has been caught in the web of sin. Sarai acted in presumption; Abram lapsed into passivity; Hagar was the victim of pride."³²

Mr. Stiger continues to say when Abram was instructed to leave Ur, Sarai was not mentioned as a part of the process to deliver the heir. It is his thought there was an

³² Howard Stigers, Bible.org. Genesis: From Paradise to Patriarchs", "When Women Wear the Pants (Genesis 16:1-16)," accessed 4-29-2016, <https://bible.org/seriespage/when-women-wear-pants-genesis-161-16>.

implication that God would provide a son not Abram or Sarai.³³ This is a far stretching thought process for me since Abram and Sarai were married, it would be understood that the child would come through their loins. There is a clear understanding by the researcher of the customs and traditions of that day to have a concubine, however it is not known exactly when Hagar was acquired, yet it is believed with the trip into Egypt Hagar was given to Abram as a gift from the king. The promise was given before their journey into Egypt and it is almost ten years later and Sarai decides to encourage her husband to go sleep with her maid, servant, and produce a child.

This is where Mr. Stiger and I agree Abram is no more a patriarch he is a pushover. God was never mentioned in the conversation between Abram and Sarai, neither was the promise mentioned as it was told to Abram. With the promise given to Abram it appears the implications of his actions did not play a part in his decision to move forward and follow his wife's instructions to sleep with her servant.

This is where Mr. Stiger and I agree and disagree he felt Hagar had not committed a sin by going in to sleep with Hagar, she was a slave and had no other options yet her false sense of pride and smugness which was displayed toward Sarah was the sin Hagar committed. It is the thought of the research there was no sin for Hagar. Yes she may have walked around the camp like a peacock, but because the way she had been treated by her patriarch and his wife left a pain in Hagar where she may have felt she needed to retaliate. It is not noted in the text that Sarai or Abram ever attempted to repent for their

³³ Howard Stigers, Bible.org. Genesis: From Paradise to Patriarchs", "When Women Wear the Pants (Genesis 16:1-16)," accessed 4-29-2016, <https://bible.org/seriespage/when-women-wear-pants-genesis-161-16>

wrong doings, therefore, not justifying it just commenting when a person is hurt, sometimes their behaviors does not represent a loving and caring interaction.

New Testament

Conflict between people in scripture can be seen countless times. These conflicts are a reminder to always rely on God's guidance for direction in order to reach divine destiny. Following God requires faith because life's journey does not always lend itself to the obvious. Acts 15:36-41 is the New Testament foundation for this project.

"Then after some days Paul said to Barnabas "Let us now go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they are doing." Now Barnabas was determine to take with them John called Mark. But Paul insisted that they should not take with them the one who had departed from them in Pamphylia, and had not gone with them to the work. Then the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another. And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed Cyprus; but Paul chose Silas and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of God. And he went through Syria and Cilicia strengthening the churches."³⁴

John Mark is the primary person of interest in this text along with two other characters. These persons and their relationship with each other speak to the premise of this research project.

The Apostle Paul was known as Saul of Tarsus before his conversion to Christianity. He became one of the most influential leaders in the early days of the Christian church. Tarsus, the Hellenistic urban setting of Paul's youth, had a profound

³⁴ Acts 15:36-41 (NKJV)

impact on his anthropology, his worldview, his openness to Gentiles, and his religious consciousness.³⁵ Bultmann says he feels “Paul persecuted Hellenistic Christianity because he could not help seeing it as an attack on the law.” Paula Fredriksen is convinced “that the proclamation of Jesus as Messiah was so politically dangerous that the fear of savage Roman reprisals causing irreparable harm moved Jews like Paul to attempt to silence messianists in his home synagogue in Damascus.”³⁶

Richard N. Longenecker in his book *The Road from Damascus the Impact of Paul's Conversion on His Life, Thought, and Ministry* states “conversion,” is not mentioned in the text yet based on sociological and psychological criteria something happened to Paul that day. Longenecker wants us to validate the Damascus Road experience which in some people's minds, never happened. He goes on to say this was a conversion and it had three meanings “(1) a gradual change of life that grows out of the past is an ‘alternation,’ (2) a sudden change of life rejects the past and takes a new directions is a ‘conversion,’ (3) a cognitive change of life that reconceives the past is a ‘transformation.’”³⁷ Many questioned Paul's Damascus Road experience including the Apostles. At some point between the encounter on the Damascus Road and his conversion, Saul's name changed to Paul as a symbol of the change that had occurred in his life and Spirit. Paul preached and ministered in the Damascus area for almost three years before his life was threatened at which point he fled from Damascus to Jerusalem.

³⁵ Calvin J. Roetzel, *Paul the Man and the Myth* (Columbus, SC: University of South Carolina, 1998), 11

³⁶ Calvin J. Roetzel, *Paul the Man and the Myth* (Columbus, SC: University of South Carolina: Columbus, SC 1998), 39.

³⁷ Richard N. Longenecker edited by, *The Road from Damascus the Impact of Paul's Conversion on His Life, Thought, and Ministry*, (Grand Rapids MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 15.

During his missionary journeys to Asia Minor and Europe, Paul served as the primary instrument of the expansion of the gospel to the Gentiles. Moreover, his letters to various churches and individuals contain the most thorough and deliberate theological formulations of the NT.³⁸

News spread of the large number of non-Jews in Antioch that had become believers; and the apostles selected Barnabas to investigate. John Pollock in his book *The Apostle a Life of Paul* says “Barnabas was delighted at what he found and encouraged them all to hold fast to the Lord with resolute hearts.”³⁹

Barnabas’ was given his name by the apostles as early convert to Christianity in Jerusalem. Formerly called Joseph, Barnabas probably earned his new name through effective preaching and teaching.⁴⁰ The Bible introduces us to Barnabas in Acts 4:36 with the interpretation of his name as “the son of consolation”. *The Harper’s Bible Dictionary* references Barnabas’ name in the Hebrew as “Son of encouragement”⁴¹ The text also tells us that Barnabas was a Levite. The tribe of Levi was composed of the descendants of Levi’s three sons: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. Moses, Aaron, and Miriam traced their genealogy to Kohath (Ex 6:16). The Levites remained faithful to

³⁸ W. A. Elwell, & Beitzel, B. J., In *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988).

³⁹ John Pollock *The Apostle A Life of Paul* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books a division of SP Publication, Inc., 1972), 62.

⁴⁰ W. A. Elwell, & Beitzel, B. J. In *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988).

⁴¹ Paul J. Achtemeier, *Harper’s Bible Dictionary* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1817), 94.

Yahweh at the occasion of the golden calf by Mt Horeb. They were rewarded with the right to special service in and around the tabernacle (Ex 32) and later in the temple.⁴²

The Easton's Bible Dictionary says Barnabas was a native of Cyprus, where he had a possession of some land (Acts 4:36, 37).⁴³ It is noted that he sold his property and gave the proceeds to the Jerusalem church (Acts 4:36–37).⁴⁴ This confirms that Barnabas had financial means to support his new walk as a Christian in this new era. It is not clear exactly how Barnabas was converted to Christianity yet it is documented that he was a part of the exodus from Cyprus to Jerusalem and became a “devout” follower of this new movement.⁴⁵ With this move Barnabas became a member of the church in Jerusalem. It is also documented that Barnabas had family connections in Jerusalem, since the mother of his cousin John Mark (Col 4:10) had a substantial home there (Acts 12:12–16).⁴⁶ It appears John Mark and Barnabas had a close relationship.

After Barnabas assured the disciples of Paul's intentions after his Damascus experience, Barnabas and Paul began their first missionary journey together.⁴⁷

Finally John Mark the person who becomes the central point of contention is introduced in the text. The Roman name Mark, used in addition to his Jewish name John,

⁴² W. A. Elwell, & Beitzel, B. J., In Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988).

⁴³ M. G. Easton. In Easton's Bible Dictionary (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1893).

⁴⁴ J. A. Brooks. *Barnabas*. In (C. Brand, C. Draper, A. England, S. Bond, E. R. Clendenen, & T. C. Butler, Eds.) (Nashville, TN: Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary, 2003).

⁴⁵ Andrew Robert Fausset, M.A., D.D., "Definition for 'Dispersion' Fausset's Bible Dictionary". bible-history.com - Fausset's; 1878.

⁴⁶ A. Tresham, *Barnabas the Apostle*. In (J. D. Barry & L. Wentz, Eds.) The Lexham Bible Dictionary. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012).

⁴⁷ John Pollock, *Apostle A Life of Paul* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1972), Page 69.

may indicate a Hellenistic background.⁴⁸ Hellenistic Judaism was the Jewish way of worshipping by accepting the Greek culture and language. John Mark was the son of Mary, a woman apparently of some means and influence⁴⁹ It was in this Mary's house that Peter found "many gathered together praying" when he was released from prison; and it is probable that it was here that John Mark was converted by Peter, who calls him his "son" (1 Pet. 5:13).⁵⁰ John Mark first appears in connection with his mother in the book of Acts (Acts 12:12). Normally, Mark would have been identified with his father, such as "Mark son of . . .," but he is not acknowledged in this way. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume his father was dead by the time of this New Testament record.⁵¹

It is evident that John Mark was very familiar with the birth and growth of the Christian church blossoming in Jerusalem. He understood the challenges of ministry and seemed to be ready to serve God and assist with moving the gospel into all the world as commissioned by Jesus Christ in Acts 1:8 which states "ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth."

Paul and Barnabas had already become teachers in Antioch as documented in Acts 11:26 which states "And it came to pass that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people." The church sent Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem to teach the brethren regarding circumcision as it relates to the

⁴⁸ W. A. Elwell, & Beitzel, B. J., In *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988).

⁴⁹ M. G. Easton, In *Easton's Bible Dictionary* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1893).

⁵⁰ M. G. Easton, In *Easton's Bible Dictionary* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1893).

⁵¹ D. Seal, *John Mark* In (J. D. Barry & L. Wentz, Eds.) *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012).

new converts. This became their first missionary journey and John Mark was a part of the team along with Simeon and Lucius of Cyrene and Manaen. The ministry team was confirmed by the church, through fasting and praying and the laying of hands upon them as they began to travel. In Acts 13: 4 the ministry team traveled to Seleucia which was a port, then to Cyprus which was known for its copper, a metal whose importance made the island a center of seafaring commerce.⁵² They went in to Salamis (also a seaport) where they preached the Word of God in the synagogues of the Jews and it is noted in Acts 13:5 that John also ministered there.

In Acts 13:7-12 the ministry team encounters a challenging situation in Paphos where a deputy of the country requests to speak with Paul and Barnabas Bar-jesus a Jew who was a sorcerer, and a false prophet, attempted to block this moment of evangelism. The act of worship was not unusual for the Romans as they put great stock in powers of divination and even had their own sacred oracles.⁵³ John departs from the ministry team and returns to Jerusalem "...whatever the cause, Mark's withdrawal left a wound in Paul which took years to heal."⁵⁴ It is possible that Apostle Paul did not understand the reason for John Mark's departure. It is also possible that John Mark was not mature enough to handle this level of ministry. Sometimes people get involved in ministry believing they know what it entails. Being mentored allows a person to gain valuable insight into what challenges ministry brings and how to handle those challenges. It is not known whether John Mark was given this opportunity to be mentored before moving out on the

⁵² Paul J. Achtemeier, *Harper's Bible Dictionary* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1817), 922.

⁵³ J. B. Polhill, *Acts* (Vol. 26) (Nashville TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 293.

⁵⁴ John Pollock, *The Apostle A Life of Paul* (Wheaton IL: Victor Books a division of SP Publication, Inc., 1972), 75.

missionary field or was he just taken along. When persons are not properly prepared, they sometimes wither under the pressure of adverse situations. With John Mark's departure, friction, separation and possibly anger moved Paul to a place to set John Mark on the outside of the missionary journey.

Paul decides he wanted to go back on the missionary field; and speaks to Barnabas about returning. Barnabas agreed and asked Paul to take his relative John Mark with him, but Paul refused. Paul felt John Mark deserted them at Pergo and did not want John Mark to return with them this time "It became obvious that their relationship must end."⁵⁵

Sometimes a broken relationship or friendship is not always a bad thing. When looking at the split between Paul and Barnabas one may question whether the split was necessary. One could also question whether their split ended up being beneficial to the spreading of the good news of Jesus Christ to a larger audience? The researcher feels in situations where there is intentional hurt and disappointment some good may come out of this kind of separation. Even though people were hurt, disappointed and angry over the split between Paul and Barnabas, there split caused them to take others on their journey to spread the Word abroad simultaneously and effectively. The Word of God would have ultimately been preached to many. However with the breakup of Paul and Barnabas much was accomplished. While conflict is unpleasant, this text shows that even in conflict, God can use pain and disappointment to spread the Word more effectively. God's Word was spread abroad by the pain and disappointment of Paul and Barnabas' split and the placing of John mark on the outside.

⁵⁵ John Pollock, *The Apostle A Life of Paul* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books a division of SP Publication, Inc., 1972), 116.

In Acts 15:36 Paul tells Barnabas, “let us go back to those churches from our first missionary journey to see how they are doing.” In this context Paul sees and understands that you cannot teach and empower people and then fail to follow up with them to see to additional needs such as training and support. Paul shows a sense of compassion for those pastors and church members by making sure they are moving in the right direction and with the right doctrine, especially being neophyte churches. Thus, Paul sees the need to complete another missionary trip, this time of his own desire and seemingly on the suggestion of the church.

Barnabas; wants to take his cousin John Mark on this trip, perhaps because he feels that John Mark has overcome whatever feelings of apprehension he had from the first trip and he is ready to return to the missionary field. Barnabas may feel John Mark has matured in his spiritual development and for whatever reason he left the first trip at this juncture he is ready to stay with this trip to the end. John Mark may have shared with Barnabas what really happened and why he left the first missionary trip and at this point he is ready to try again. Maybe John Mark has been able to look back on what occurred on the first trip and see he has grown in ministry from watching Paul and Barnabas in Antioch. Whatever the reasons for John Mark’s departure on the first trip, verse 37 says Barnabas is determined to take him to travel with the pastors to check on the other churches. Maybe Barnabas wanted to help Paul and John Mark reconcile.

John Mark was the center of contention. He was Barnabas’s cousin, and Barnabas suggested that he accompany them as he had on their first mission (13:5). Paul did not think this a wise move since John Mark had abandoned them on that occasion (13:13).⁵⁶

⁵⁶ J. B. Polhill, *Acts* (Vol. 26) (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 341.

What happens when a member of your congregation and/or your leadership team disappoints? Is there any opportunity for forgiveness and restoration? There is no indication that John Mark informed Paul or Barnabas why he left the first missionary journey before it was over. Nowhere does it say that John Mark asked for forgiveness. In terms of most spiritual absolution, when there is an infraction an essential condition of forgiveness is repentance. Barnabas wanted John Mark to travel with them to the same churches which he abandoned on another missionary journey without any form of repentance. This creates the opportune environment for distrust and lack of accountability and dependability within the team dynamics. To forgive is a powerful choice that one can make. It can ultimately lead to greater well-being and better relationships. When we make an attempt to forgive, we open the door for guilt and heaviness of heart to be released from us and it opens the door for the offended to find peace and restoration to build a bridge of reconciliation. It appears forgiveness was not extended from both Paul and Barnabas because Paul did not find he could trust or depend on John Mark to complete the next journey due to his actions in the first missionary journey.

Here we have a classic confrontation: the choice between disqualifying a person who has made a major blunder in the past or seeking to restore that person to a ministry role.⁵⁷ Did Mark still seem unrepentant about his earlier behavior? ⁵⁸ Luke does not tell us. He does tell us that this difference, this obvious disagreement, became a point of

⁵⁷K.O. Gangel, *Acts* (Vol. 5) (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 254-255.

⁵⁸ K. O. Gangel, *Acts* (Vol. 5) (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 255.

contention, and eventually caused a schism, a blowup between these two dear friends.⁵⁹

Was Paul wrong to think that John Mark would leave the next missionary journey because of his behaviors on the first journey? Did Barnabas have some information about John Mark that Paul was not aware of? Many times in ministry we must provide persons with an opportunity to work grow and even fail. To be able to learn from our failures, we need a way to decode the "teachable moments" hidden within them.⁶⁰

Unfortunately, the church can often be very unforgiving.

The text shows that possibly Paul did not trust John Mark, and because of his distrust of him, he also could not agree with Barnabas about Mark traveling with them a second time to visit the congregations. Paul and Barnabas allowed their own personal feelings and opinions of John Mark's abilities to break up a working, successful ministry relationship. According to an article titled *Paul, The Apostle*, the author states "the wound was too deep and the scars yet too tender to permit close association with one who had possibly, even though unwittingly, been a contributing factor in the original conflict." The article goes on to say "while Mark may have experienced a real change of heart and mind, renouncing all Judaizing tendencies and profession to be in solidarity in support of the apostolic proclamation, Paul seems to have taken the position that the issues were too great and the welfare of the churches too important for them to risk his vacillations or to be

⁵⁹ K. O. Gangel, *Acts* (Vol. 5). (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 255.

⁶⁰ Guy Winch, Ph.D., "The 4 Keys to Learning from Failure," Huff post Healthy Living, Updated 1-23-2014, accessed 3-14-2014 , http://www.huffingtonpost.com/guy-winch-phd/learning-from-failure_b_4037147.html.

reminded of earlier dissent within the party itself by his presence.”⁶¹ There is no indication that there was a conversation between Paul and John Mark to see what the problems may have been which caused him to leave the first missionary journey. Thus it seems that Paul did not allow John Mark an opportunity to regain his respect and to be reconciled on this particular mission; instead he decided to get someone else to fill the position of Barnabas and John Mark. There may be times when a person is made to be an outcast because of past mistakes. It would be another mistake not to try to help that person to grow, mature and become better.

Church hurt can be one of the most painful hurts which can cause a person to leave the church for good. It appears that Barnabas had patience with the failures of John Mark and saw something in him that was worth investing in with additional prayer, encouragement and support. Yet it seems that Paul felt, at least at this time, that John Mark was a deserter and not fit to work in ministry, at least not with him. However, looking at the bigger picture, there was history between Paul and Barnabas. Barnabas was instrumental in connecting Paul with the disciples. While the disciplines were hesitant at first, they ultimately accepted Paul and his ministry. Paul was able to visit Peter – not for the purpose of being taught by Peter or coming under Peter's authority – *to get acquainted with Peter* (v. 18).⁶² The Bible says they stayed together for fifteen days. Paul also lets us know that he also spoke with James the brother of Jesus, and not only was his interaction with both of the disciples was without incidence but there was some

⁶¹ Biblical Training, “Paul, the Apostle Paul: First Journey,” accessed 4-26-2016, <https://www.biblicaltraining.org/library/paul-apostle-0>.

⁶² “Paul’s First Visit with Peter in Jerusalem,” accessed 4-26-2016, <http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/commentaries/IVP-NT/Gal/Pauls-First-Visit-Peter>.

demonstrated admiration for the work James was completing with John. Paul states in Galatians 2:9 he was given the right hands of fellowship and encouraged to continue his ministry to the heathens. How do we get to the place in ministry where we go our separate ways to minister to others when we have not reconciled a broken relationship in our own lives and ministry? It appears that Paul was also hurt by someone he trusted to be there to work alongside him in ministry. He intentionally uses the word “abandoned” when referring to what John Mark did on the mission. When there is conflict, both parties may be equally hurt and communication is needed to facilitate forgiveness and restoration.

We need to be able as Christians to communicate when there is hurt and also provide an avenue for healing. The text shows that Paul felt abandoned by John Mark and then John Mark felt abandoned by Paul, which put each of them in a place of an outcast.

While it is important to read scripture and have revelation revealed through the text it is also beneficial to hear what others are saying about the text. What captured my attention while looking for commentary on this text was Steven J. Cole’s commentary titled “When Personalities Clash.” He makes an analogy “Church members often are like porcupines: we need each other, but we needle each other!”⁶³ He goes on to say “you cannot get involved in serving the Lord through the local church for very long before you run into someone whose personality clashes with yours.”⁶⁴ I have always been taught, you may disagree, and however, you do not have to be disagreeable. I agree with Mr.

⁶³ Steven J. Cole, “When Personalities Clash,” accessed 4-30-2016, <https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-38-when-personalities-clash-acts-1536-41>.

⁶⁴ Steven J. Cole, “When Personalities Clash,” accessed 4-30-2016; <https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-38-when-personalities-clash-acts-1536-41>.

Cole's thought there are persons in the congregation who may make it hard to work together in ministry yet we must find a way to work together for the greater good of the ministry.

Mr. Cole asked the question who was right with the dispute between Paul and Barnabas? He believes the nod goes to Paul. I agree totally Paul should have been upset about the actions of John Mark leaving the group on the first missionary journey however did this call for a separation of two men who had preached together, travelled together, fellowshiped together, and had a mutual love for each other. The departure of Paul and Barnabas could have been with a mutual respect for their differences, and the blessings of each of them for the continued ministry effort.

Mr. Cole makes a valid statement which will help preachers who want to start their own ministries and those senior pastors who are being left behind to feel the void of their departure. He says "unity does not mean that we all have to work closely with one another." From the separation of Paul and Barnabas, ministry was presented to separate groups which could not have been accomplished with Paul and Barnabas travelling together. Is it possible God was not the author of confusion, yet He allowed the Word to be preached to those who may not have heard it from strong, resilient leaders like Paul and Barnabas?

I am not advocating ministry separation out of bitterness or anger, nonetheless, I would like for the body of Christ to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Much can be learned from people who feel like an outcast by church leaders and church members. Jesus took a risk on all 12 of the disciples, including Peter. When

Barnabas chose Paul, a former persecutor of the church, it was a huge risk⁶⁵. The church must focus on the untapped positive spiritual potential of those persons who are attempting to engage in ministry. Scott Thomas goes on to say “it’s easy to write people off because of early missteps. But those who train up leaders have eyes to see past a new leader’s flaws and foibles.” He provides a profound analogy which I believe Paul eventually was able to see “We often prefer emerging leaders in our churches to be more like mules than stallions. Mules are great at carrying heavy loads over long distances. And they’re not as spirited like stallions. Stallions are designed to run.”⁶⁶

Conclusion

As stated in the introduction, throughout the course of history persons have experienced pain and have been made to feel like an outcast either from something they have done or an action which was done to them. Our definition of outcast reminds us the reality may be a physical awareness of pain or a perception. In both selected the Old and New Testament scriptures the stories are still relevant and provide insight for people who feel like outcasts of society. Dr. Peter Bellini assistant professor at United Theological Seminary said that as an Italian attending Ohio State University he felt like an outcast among the student body and professors because he did not look like them. There was a perception of him that he was with the “mob” and could not be trusted. He went on to say persons of the white persuasion had social advantages, and benefits which were not

⁶⁵ Scott Thomas, Leadership Journal, Winter, 2013, “Developing Future Leaders Seven principles for training the next generation of church leaders,” accessed 4-26-2016, <http://www.ctlibrary.com/le/2013/winter/developing-future-leaders.html>.

⁶⁶ Scott Thomas, Leadership Journal, Winter, 2013, “Developing Future Leaders Seven principles for training the next generation of church leaders,” accessed 4-26-2016, <http://www.ctlibrary.com/le/2013/winter/developing-future-leaders.html>.

given to persons of color or many other ethnic cultures, in the schools, and even in his neighborhood. He did not take on this posture with the African American's who lived right outside of his neighborhood, he determined that racism was a demon which had to be put in its place by the Holy Spirit and he interacted with persons inside and outside of his community. Finally, he stated today he is teaching his daughter to be observant and aware "that black lives matter."

When looking at the texts chosen from Genesis and Acts, we can see modern persons in our churches, and families. What is it we should glean from God's Word? The Bible does not record any forgiveness or restoration between Hagar, Abram and Sarai. However, God's messenger comforted and encouraged Hagar in the midst of others abandoning her. It is during those times of disappointment and feelings of abandonment that god is able to comfort and provide restoration.

As one looks toward the promise of God instead of revenge, the opportunity for human restoration will often present itself. Take the steps toward personal healing by communicating with persons who hurt you thereby beginning the forgiveness and restoration process. Paul and John Mark were able to reconcile as noted in 2 Timothy 4:11 and Paul even recommended John Mark for service in Colossians 4:10 with Aristarchus, a follower of Paul who travelled with him on his third missionary journey.

- 2 Timothy 4:11 – "Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry".⁶⁷

⁶⁷ 2 Tim.4:11 (NKJV)

- Colossians 4:10 –“Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, with Mark the cousin of Barnabas (about whom you received instructions: if he comes to you, welcome him),”⁶⁸

With this reconciliation Paul became a respected apostle, teacher, preacher, missionary and author of thirteen books in the New Testament. John Mark became the first author of the gospels. Neither of these men waited to be reconciled to begin their ministry work yet once reconciliation was achieved they were able to work together again. This showed that Christians may have conflicts and get angry and hurt each. But God can bring restoration to broken fellowship.

With this presentation we want persons to understand that there is value in everyone. There is potential in everyone. Whether a church leader, family member or friend we need to be able to discern the value in all people. Furthermore, we need to mentor, train and prepare others for the work of ministry. There is much to do, and leaders need not be selfish in efforts grooming and preparing persons for ministry. Whether we are the pastor, teachers or ministry leaders, if we invest in potential leaders we will be able to say as the Word says in I Corinthians 2:9 “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Col. 4:10 (NKJV)

⁶⁹ I Cor. 2:9 (NKJV)

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

This historical foundation section will focus on individuals in history who have experienced the impact of pain as a result of involvement in the church ultimately causing them to feel isolated as an outcast. This section will also explore whether or not these persons were able to move from the hurt to a place of healing and restoration.

Today in the church and in society we see the challenges of persons who have experienced pain, rejection, and hurt. Anne Graham Lotz, the daughter of Rev. Billy Graham, in her book *Discovering How God's Love Heals Our Hearts Wounded by God's People*, speaks of the pain she experienced by Christians.¹ Upon reading Lotz life experience, I decided to focus on the painful experiences of three individuals – Martin Luther, Jarena Lee and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Martin Luther, one of the early theologians, experienced extraordinary hurt, pain and rejection. Jarena Lee, a black woman called to preach in the 1800's, felt rejection from the African Methodist Episcopal church who denied her the opportunity to preach in the A.M.E. church. Martin Luther King Jr. was rejected by white and black Americans who believed that he perpetuated hatred and was anti-American.

¹ Anne Graham Lotz, *Discovering How God's Love Heals Our Hearts Wounded by God's People* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003).

Author Stephen Mansfield, in his book *Healing Your Church Hurt What to do When You Still Love God but have been Wounded by His People*,² reveals how one person dealt with hurt and pain which resulted from a theological disagreement with his pastor.² Because of their disagreement, Mansfield left the church and was inspired to write a book on church hurt.

Martin Luther

Martin Luther believed that the pope, the instructors of his school and the men in authority used their own scriptural interpretation to preach and teach the people. Luther challenged them because of his own beliefs and understanding of scripture. Subsequently Luther was persecuted, isolated and threatened by church leaders and political representatives of his day.

Luther was born in 1483 in Eisleben, Germany. He was raised in a traditional German family in which his father was an entrepreneur and his mother was a housewife. Luther's challenges began at an early age at home with his father. His father was a strict disciplinarian which caused tension in the home. Around the age of fourteen, Luther was sent to a Catholic boarding school. While there, his instructors became the primary authority figures in his life. After graduating from college he returned home. One day near his home, a lightning bolt struck right beside him and he called for help from Saint Anna. After this experience he made the decision not to become a lawyer, as his father desired but a monk in response to his fear of God. He gave careful consideration to this change in vocation and entered the monastery fifteen days after his scare with the

² Stephen Mansfield, *Healing Your Church Hurt What to do When You Still Love God but Have Been Wounded by His People* (Austin TX: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2010), vii.

lightning bolt. His father stopped speaking to him and again Luther was separated from his family as an outcast. Luther had no further contact with his family until 1525 when he and his father reconciled after Luther's marriage.

It is not known exactly how this reconciliation came about but it reveals to us that early on in his life Luther experienced the pain of being an outcast in his own family. This experience of a strained relationship with his father may have helped to prepare Luther for the future pain, hurt and isolation he would experience in the church.

Luther was a great student at Wittenberg. He found that reading the Word of God helped shape his theology. He would always challenge what he read or what he was taught by his instructors against the scriptures.³ With his critical intellect and inquisitive mind, Luther began to see differences in what his instructors were saying and written scripture.

In 1512 Luther was awarded the doctor of theology degree. This degree allowed a person to voice their opinion with the stipulation your opinion must be accepted teachings of the church.⁴ If anyone challenged him he reminded them he had a doctoral degree. Luther was also a leader, instructor, preacher and a representative of the Bishop.

Luther had many disagreements with the Catholic Church's policies and practices but his main issue with the church was the selling of indulgences. This is a practice which allows persons to pay for unatoned sins. Luther believed the only reason for this practice was to make money for the church. He felt this new practice was in total opposition to the Word of God. His preaching informed the people that forgiveness was in God's power

³ Donald K. McKim, edited by *The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 7.

⁴ Donald K. McKim, edited by *The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 7.

alone and not in the payment of money or the rules of the Church who based this practice on their own interpretation of the scripture. He wanted the church and the people to understand the foundation of their faith was fueled by the forgiveness of sin, not by how much money they could pay.

A trial was opened in Rome for heresy against Luther. Despite the rejection he experienced and the tension among the leadership in the church, Luther continued to write the following papers to help people see and understand his theology, which he believed was the truth of the Word of God. He wrote:

- Of God's Works – an interpretation of the Ten Commandments.
- To The Christian Nobility of the German Nation Regarding the Improvement of the Christian Estate – This writing encouraged the secular authorities to add their support to a reform for Christianity.
- On The Babylonian Captivity of the Church – This writing was done for a theologically educated group. In this paper he discussed the sacraments, marriage, ordination and repentance. He also wrote regarding his opposition to the Roman Catholic Church's understanding of the Lord's Super.⁵

Finally, his most consequential writing which probably led to his excommunication was "On the Freedom of a Christian." In this document Luther wanted Christians to know they had freedom from whatever power of humans, power of sin and any force which wanted to oppose God. He further wrote that faith allows us to fear, not

⁵ Donald K. McKim, edited by *The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 10.

in horror, but with the capacity to love God. This is what gives us the desire to do God's will. In his exegesis of the book of Esther, he highlights what helps him to face whatever the king, the pope and members of society were trying to offer him as an alternative to believing the Word of God. He goes on to say "the experience of faith as something that cannot be understood until one has 'tasted the great strength' faith offers in dangerous situations."⁶ Luther wanted people to know that faith gives you courage, and this courage gives you the ability to be able to hear, write, read and mediate on it. He lets us know we must face whatever challenges the world brings to us with the strength of our faith guiding us.

In a meeting on April 18, 1521 Luther was expected to renounce everything he said and did in front of the emperor and the imperial estates against the Church. He was very defiant, stubborn and adamant that he held to the Holy Scriptures. He took a stand against the authorities based on the Holy Scriptures and his faith. He realized he must face those who wanted to hurt and destroy him with his courage of faith. Martin wanted the pope, the teachers and the politicians to dispute his writings by using the scriptures. Whatever consequences he had to face he would. However, since they could not dispute his writings with scripture he stood by his belief. Martin knew he may be killed for his actions against the Church, but he stood by his convictions and endured the pain.

In 1521 Martin Luther had one person supporting him, Elector Friedrich the Wise, who put him in Wartburg Castle for his own safety. He was now an outcast from the

⁶ Mary Gaebler, *The Courage Of Faith Martin Luther and the Theonomous Self* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013), 7.

church, school, and possible his family. He experienced the pain of isolation and boredom. He was in exile and he suffered with illnesses both physically and emotionally.

Having been connected to the Catholic Church for most of his life, he is now an outcast because of his scriptural convictions which are in direct opposition to the teachings of the church. The common people found solace in Luther's teaching, writings and preaching. Wherever he was the people showed up to support him and to listen to him. However, when the time came to excommunicate him they could not speak for him nor could they testify for him. Because his teachings and beliefs interfered with the church's ability to make money, the Catholic church wanted Luther out of the church and away from the members of the church.

Jarena Lee

- Jarena Lee was the first female preacher rejected by Bishop Richard Allen in the Bethel A.M.E. church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Lee was called by God to preach but was denied the opportunity to pursue her calling because she was a woman. Lee was born February 11, 1783 in Cape May, New Jersey. At the age of seven she was taken from her parents and sent to work as a live-in servant with a white family by the name of Sharp in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.⁷ In 1804 Lee heard a Presbyterian missionary preach and she was convicted. She was twenty-one years old at the time. Lee stated the first verse of the Psalm that convicted her, "Lord, I am vile, conceived in sin, Born unholy and unclean. Sprung from man, whose guilty fall, Corrupts the race and taints us all."

⁷ BlackPast.org Remembered & Reclaimed, Lee, Jarena (1783-185?), accessed 4-26-2016, <http://www.blackpast.org/aah/lee-jarena-1783>.

She says she felt bad because the reality of her sins and her sinful nature was right in front of her. Learning about her sinful nature made her feel so bad she went down to a brook to drown herself. According to Lee she heard a voice saying to her “put your head under the water it will not distress you.” She later realized that was the voice of the devil. Because she was a new Christian she did not recognize the devil’s intent. However, by some miracle, Lee realized she had been saved from killing herself by God.⁸

Realizing that her current church was not right for her, she left and went visiting, looking for something to satisfy her soul. She started visiting the English Church where the pastor was preaching Methodism in American. Methodism is a doctrine which is inspired by the teachings and life of John Wesley. In this particular church Lee did not feel a kinship to the congregation. She received the Word being taught but there was no personal connection with the people.

After leaving a worship service Lee went to the head cook where she was staying and asked about the church she was attending. She found out it was a Methodist church different from the English Church, and different from the Presbyterian Church. Lee was informed by the cook there were strict rules in this society. She was told that a preacher by the name of Rev. Richard Allen was preaching so she went to hear him. His text was Acts 8:2. Through Rev. Allen’s preaching, Lee sensed that this was where she belonged. She felt a kinship with the people and power from the preaching of the pastor. After the message Lee heard Rev. Allen make a plea to come on trial to be a member of the church. She liked the idea and moved forward to make this her church. During her conversion

⁸ Catharine L. Albansese, and Stephen J. Stein, editors *Sisters of the Spirit, Religion in North America* (Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 1986).

period and sitting under the preachment of Rev. Allen, Lee would experience dreams, out of body experiences and would she would hear voices. She believed all of these efforts were to help her grow in her faith, and love for God. As she heard God speak she would often hear the devil speak and many times she would doubt herself. Thankfully God would always rejuvenate her and assure her He was with her.

In 1807 Lee heard a voice saying to her “go preach the gospel.”⁹ Lee said she had to go to her secret place to pray to God because she did not believe she was hearing from God a call to preach. She understood that in a male-dominated church she may not get the chance to preach. Lee was sure God had called her to preach. She was so stressed by the message that when she went to sleep that night she woke up hearing herself preaching. It is said she preached so loud she woke up everyone in the house.

The call to preach was so strong on Lee that she had to speak with Rev. Allen. She went to his house and while she was on her way she turned around several times to return to her home because she feared speaking with her pastor. Once she got into his presence all those feelings disappeared and she told Rev. Allen she was called to preach. Much to her dismay Rev. Allen responded “Where do you plan to preach?” She immediately responded in the Methodist Church. He informed her she would not be preaching there because he had to uphold the A.M.E. church’s ban against female ministers.¹⁰ Secondly, Rev. Allen did not see the necessity of including women in ordained ministry, preferring to encourage their involvement as prayer band leaders,

⁹ Anne H. Pinn, and Athony B. Pinn, *Fortress Introduction to Black Church History* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002), 49.

¹⁰ BlackPast.org Remembered & Reclaimed, Lee, Jarena (1783-185?), accessed 4-26-2016, <http://www.blackpast.org/aah/lee-jarena-1783>.

deaconess, stewardess, that were under the authority of a man.¹¹ Even though Lee knew what Rev. Allen would say, one could only assume she expected a different answer because she said God had called her to preach. Rev. Allen tried to move her away from her call to preach by suggesting that she become an exhorter. This was someone who speaks after a male preacher has preached. Lee was quite aware at this time that she had been rejected by the church, her pastor and the leadership based on tradition, rules and prejudices. Lee was hurt and very upset and asked Rev. Allen several questions to help her understand why she was not approved to preach the gospel:

- If a man may preach, why not a woman? There was no response from Rev. Allen.
- Was God a half God only for men? There was no response from Rev. Allen.

She then asked a most poignant question, “Wasn’t Mary the first preacher after the resurrection?”¹²

Rev. Allen answered this question in a very arrogant and defensive manner by saying Mary did not explain the scripture. It is common knowledge that Mary was the first messenger to proclaim the resurrection of Jesus but some men refuse to equate that to preaching. Lee was denied the opportunity to preach with no sound biblical reason given. This refusal was disappointing to Lee because she was convinced that she heard the voice of God who called her to preach the gospel.

¹¹ Anne H. Pinn, and Pinn, Anthony B., *Fortress Introduction to Black Church History*. (Minneapolis MN: Fortress Press, 2002), 36.

¹² Catherine L. Albanese, and Stein, Stephen J., editors *Sisters of the Spirit, Religion in North America* (Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 1986).

After being hurt by this rejection, Lee married Pastor Joseph Lee in 1811 and moved about six miles from Philadelphia. There is no documentation that suggests that Lee ever informed her husband she was called to preach. Perhaps the pain of being rejected by Rev. Allen caused her not to risk further rejection from her husband. Lee lived with her husband and worked in the church. On occasion she made mention that she was hurt, lonely and did not feel the congregation was accepting of her. After seven years of marriage, her husband died and Lee returned to Philadelphia. She also returned to the Bethel A.M.E. church which caused her so much pain in the past.

Eight year after returning to Philadelphia, Lee was in a service and a male preacher was preaching from Jonah 2:9. The title of the message was “Salvation Is of the Lord.” The preacher began to struggle and he said he “lost the Spirit” and could not continue. Lee saw this as an opportunity so she got up and preached the text.¹³ After she finished preaching she let the congregation know that she informed Rev. Allen seventeen years earlier that she had been called by God to preach the gospel. Lee thought she would be excommunicated from the church for preaching. When Rev. Allen got up he had to confirm that Lee told him she was called to preach seventeen years ago. He had to also admit that he had denied her request based on the rules of the church. However, after hearing her expound on the word of God, even Rev. Allen had to confirm she was called to preach. Without the benefit of sermon preparation or a manuscript, Lee preached so powerfully and passionately that her calling was evident to Rev. Allen and the entire congregation.

¹³ Catherine L. Albanese, and Stein, Stephen J. editors *Sisters of the Spirit, Religion in North America* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986).

While Lee was affirmed by Rev. Allen with a license to preach, she was never allowed to preach again at Bethel A.M.E. church. There was no definitive reason ever given as to why she was never allowed to preach there again. Apparently, the church was still not ready to fully embrace women preachers. Still determined to preach, Lee found a neighbor's home and she preached there. After preaching at this particular location for one week, Lee moved to another home and stayed there for six months, preaching, teaching, and holding healing services. Seeing the results of her labor was very gratifying to Lee. Altogether she travelled over 1,600 miles and walked over 211 of those miles while preaching the kingdom of God.¹⁴ While she was the first woman to preach in the A.M.E. Church, she was never ordained. Rev. Allen gave her verbal affirmation and a license to preach but never fully validated her calling with ordination.

It is ironic that while Rev. Allen chose not to ordain Lee, he began to take her with him while he was preaching in others states such as Maryland, and New York. She was known to preach to powerfully that the Spirit of God would fall on those in the church, home, fields or wherever she was expounding on the Gospel.

The A.M.E. Church wanted to restrict the participation of the majority of its members, namely black woman. However, Lee, who was not a professional theologian, pushed the church to network its stance on women in ministry which benefited the church

¹⁴ Simon Schama, *The American Future A History* (New York, NY: HarperCollinsPublishers, 2009), 191.

with her “courage commitment and dedication in ministry without official recognition title or ordination”.¹⁵

Lee endured the initial pain of rejection from Rev. Allen who denied her the opportunity to preach at Bethel A.M.E. church. She then married a preacher and while being first lady she experienced discontentment and loneliness. She felt her energy was robbed and that she was being deprived of doing what God had called her to do. While she was away from her Philadelphia home, she was an outcast.¹⁶ Through her perseverance, Lee demonstrates that even when others try to deny the call of God on your life, you must not give up hope. It is God who will present the opportunity to prove His calling in you.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a Baptist minister and a social activist. After seeing how his people were suffering from racial injustice, he dedicated himself to work for justice and healing. While King is held universally as a hero for the work that he did, there were those who did not agree with his methods. It is worth noting that there were some local and national church leaders who opposed what he was doing and the way he was attempting to get it done. King’s approach was nonviolence, yet he was attacked physically, mentally, spiritually and emotionally, not just by the government but also by white and black people of every economic and social status.

¹⁵ Vashti M. McKenzie, *Not Without A Struggle Leadership Development for African American Women in Ministry* (Cleveland OH: United Church Press, 1996), 33.

¹⁶ Catherine L. Albanese, L. and Stephen J. Stein, editors *Sisters of the Spirit, Religion in North America* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986).

King expressed his frustration, displeasure and resentment in his *Letter from Birmingham City Jail*. It was during that time in his life that he experienced what it felt like being an outcast. This letter confirms that not much has changed over the last 50 years in the church when it comes to racial injustice and prejudice. There was a notable group of eight white preachers who found it difficult to support King and the civil rights movement. Those eight white preachers signed a document voicing their displeasure with King and the Southern Christian Leadership Council's protest against racial injustice. This action made it quite obvious that there was also racial tension and unrest within the church.

King was joined by Fred Shuttlesworth, who was also a Baptist Minister and Civil Rights Activist. They were attempting to have a series of sit-ins and pickets known as the Birmingham Campaign. The purpose of these demonstrations was to stop municipal segregation ordinances in Birmingham. Before King's arrest, a group of white religious leaders from Alabama came together to discuss the racial tension and issued a public statement that questioned the timing and method of the civil rights demonstrations.¹⁷ These discussions were closed to King and he was not given an opportunity to explain what he wanted to do and how he wanted to handle the demonstrations. The names of the religious leaders were:

- Rabbi Milton Grafman of Temple Emanu-El;
- Catholic Bishop Joseph A. Durick;
- Methodist Bishop Nolan Harmon
- Episcopal Bishop Charles C. J. Carpenter

¹⁷ Jonathan Bass, Encyclopedia of Alabama, Letter from Birmingham Jail, accessed 4-27-2016, <http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-1389>.

- Episcopal Bishop George M. Murray
- Methodist Bishop Paul Hardin
- Rev. Edward Ramage of First Presbyterian Church,

Interestingly enough the families of these leaders had mixed feelings about their particular loved one's participation in crafting this joint statement against the civil rights movement. Some family members wanted to recant their father's participation in the letter writing. Some family members wanted to justify what was said. Some wanted the world to know there was no malice intended towards King - just that their fathers felt King's efforts were respectable but not the best timing. It may not have been the intention of these white religious leaders to hurt King or to stop the demonstrations, but they did.

These white religious leaders had difficulty supporting King's efforts because they seemed too radical. They also could not fully identify with the struggles of African Americans who felt the need to speak out against the government. To delay the civil rights demonstrations in Birmingham would be seen as a major setback for the movement. Therefore, King was made to be an outcast, hurt and disappointed by the white religious leaders of his day.

It is understandable that those white religious leaders could not fully understand the struggle of King and the African Americans which caused them not to support King's efforts. However, it is another story when resistance comes from within the African American community itself.

Peter Paris in his book *Black Leaders in Conflict* states, "While it is generally assumed that Black religious leaders disagree with one another on many matters, it is a

fact that they rarely do so publicly. Although their views are often shared with close associates, they seldom reach a wider audience.”¹⁸ Unfortunately, the disagreement between Rev. Joseph H. Jackson and King concerning the civil rights movement was very public.

King had other preachers who did not agree with his efforts yet they did not always voice their opinions. They just tried to ignore him and his efforts. Rev. Joseph H. Jackson did not follow that same approach. He was a public opponent of King who disagreed with, argued with, opposed and disputed everything King was trying to do.¹⁹ Jackson was the president of the National Baptist Convention which was one of the largest organizations comprised of black people. He was also the pastor of the Olivet Baptist Church in Chicago, Illinois.

Jackson opposed King and the Civil Rights movement. Sam Hitchmough says the disputes and disagreements were over the Jackson and Kings differing views on how patriotism should be displayed. Jackson believed persons should use a self-help process; meaning they should seize any and every opportunity within the existing system without acknowledging the fact that racism and discrimination could restrict those opportunities. King believed that together as an African-American community we are able to collectively prove our worth so that we may acquire what we are entitled too because it is

¹⁸ Peter Paris, *Black Leaders in Conflict* (New York, NY: The Pilgrim Press, 1978), 11.

¹⁹ Sam Hitchmough, *Missions of Patriotism: Joseph H. Jackson and Martin Luther King*. (European Journal of American Studies, Vol. 6, No. 1, Spring, 2011), accessed 4-26-2016, <http://ejas.revues.org/9155#authors>.

a matter of right rather than a favor.²⁰ When reading both of their arguments it appears both men wanted the same thing, equality and justice for their people. Their differing methods for achieving this was the point of contention.

Jackson was friends with Chicago mayor Richard Dailey. King wanted to bring the Southern Christian Leadership Conference to Chicago for a civil rights campaign. Because of Jackson's relationship with the mayor and his influence with many of the pastors in the city he blocked the event by telling pastors to tell their members not to attend. He also made false accusations to the mayor about King concerning the Southern Leadership's progress and failures and how King's protest would have local and national repercussions.²¹ The result of Jackson's efforts was a poorly attended rally. King was disappointed by what Jackson did, but he was much more hurt by those pastors who would not even give him a chance to speak to them about what the Southern Leadership Council was attempting to do for the city of Chicago and throughout the United States.

Jackson's efforts to block King contradicted his previous positive interactions with King. In previous years Jackson spent time in the home of King's parents. Jackson even wrote a letter to King stating he sent a message via phone and telegram to every state in the union asking that they support King. With the letter he also sent two \$1,000 checks from the National Baptist Convention and from his church to support King's

²⁰ Sam Hitchmough, *Missions of Patriotism: Joseph H. Jackson and Martin Luther King*. (European Journal of American Studies, Vol. 6, No. 1, Spring, 2011), accessed 4-26-2016, <http://ejas.revues.org/9155#authors>.

²¹ Sam Hitchmough, *Missions of Patriotism: Joseph H. Jackson and Martin Luther King*. (European Journal of American Studies, Vol. 6, No. 1, Spring, 2011), accessed 4-26-2016, <http://ejas.revues.org/9155#authors>.

efforts.²² It was Martin Luther King, Sr. that helped Jackson become president of the convention but now they seemed to be arch rivals.

Jackson believed that people should not dwell on a person's tendency to sin or to error in their thinking or actions. He believed there was potential good in every one.²³ But apparently that belief did not extend to King. Because of their difference in philosophy, Jackson succeeded in alienating and placing King in a place of pain which cause him to feel at times like an outcast. Jackson felt that sit-ins, rallies, and peace walks sowed seeds of bitterness, hatred, conflict and even violence. However, King believed if all of God's people worked together to bring unity within their own race and then spread abroad, America would truly be the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Luther, Lee and King all experienced hurt from church leaders, family and associates. The hurt that was inflicted upon them seemed to be based on their belief in how God was directing their lives. Each of them continued to fight for what they believed regardless of the disrespect, disputes, and disagreements. Luther took the hurt and pain and made something positive out of it. He did not fret or get angry to the point of not being useful or creative. Instead, as he committed to the work of ministry, he began to write sermons and translated the New Testament from Greek to German. He found that the strength of his faith moved him forward in spite of being an outcast in the castle of Wartburg. From his protests in opposition to the Catholic Church he was instrumental in the Protestant Reformation. While he never reconciled with the Catholic Church, one might conclude that Luther gained much satisfaction in knowing that he held true to his

²² Clayborne Carson, Senior Editor, *The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr., Birth of a New Age December 1955-December 1956 Volume III*. (London, ENG: University of California Press, 1997).

²³ Peter J. Paris, *Black Leaders in Conflict* (New York, NY: The Pilgrim Press, 1978).

convictions. Mary Gaebler stated, “Luther, like Mordecai, calls individuals into the dangerous and important work that God has designed for each one of them.”²⁴ While the Catholic Church never embraced Luther’s critique of their practices, he became an historic figure by changing the landscape of the church world by becoming the founder of the Protestant Reformation.

In the case of Lee, her deep conviction to the call of ministry led her to preach in many cities and states. In so doing, she led many people to Christ and many people experienced healing and deliverance. She was given license and authorized by Rev. Richard Allen to preach as a representative of the A.M.E. Church in 1819. She even travelled with Allen from state to state preaching. Although she was licensed by the A.M.E. church, she was never allowed to preach in her home church, Bethel A.M.E. nor was she ever ordained by the church. This probably remained a major disappointment for Lee.

In the case of King, he received numerous awards and citations for his efforts to achieve equal rights and justice for all people. However, he was constantly questioned and challenged by those who did not agree with his methods. His non-violent approach was always being examined by African Americans who felt a need to either retaliate or do nothing at all. While King never received universal acceptance during his lifetime, he understood that his mission was more important than his own personal comfort. He understood that he was working for the greater good of all people. He verbalized this sentiment when he said in one of his most famous speeches that he may not get to the promised land himself but that as a people we would get to the promised land.

²⁴ Mary Gaebler, *The Courage Of Faith Martin Luther And The Theonomous Self* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013).

Conclusion

Throughout the history of the church, persons have experienced situations which ultimately caused them to feel like an outcast. The church has been a place where some have been hurt, experienced isolation, disappointed, and been misunderstood. The result has been feelings of anger, frustration and loneliness. The ultimate result has been that some have become outcasts from their own communities.

We have seen from Martin Luther, Jarena Lee and Martin Luther King, Jr., that hurt can come from church leaders, family members, friends, and other ethnic groups. The pain inflicted can be intentional or unintentional. Whether inflicted intentionally or not, the pain still hurts. These hurtful experiences left some bitter, resentful, angry and separated from fellowship with the church, family and friends.

Some of the relationships that Luther, Lee and King had were never reconciled. It is difficult to restore some relationship after the trust has been broken. While Luther, Lee and King were hurt in life, they refused to let that stop them from carrying out what they believed God called them to do. In so doing they each changed the world in some way. They all chose to move beyond their personal pain caused by others and focus on what God was directing them to do. These persons provide hope and an example to others that you can continue to thrive and grow in the midst of the pain experienced from conflict in life.

Luther was prohibited from preaching the Word of God so instead he wrote sermons and translated the Word from Greek to German so that others could read it. Ironically, his writings proved far effective than any sermon could have been. Through his writings he started the Protestant Reformation. His printed words allowed many people to have access to his beliefs and his understanding of God's word. Ultimately, Luther was not stopped by his pain but redirected that pain to keep his focus on getting the message of God's word to the world.

While she was not allowed to preach in Bethel A.M.E. church, Lee found other venues to preach the gospel and meet the needs of the people. She did not allow opposition to her call or discrimination against her gender stop her from preaching the gospel. She found peace in knowing that she had been called by God to preach the gospel and when the opportunity presented itself she took advantage of it. While she was never ordained, she paved the way for women preachers in the A.M.E. church which today even have women bishops.

King's Letter from a Birmingham Jail was in part motivated by eight white religious leaders who expressed their discontent with King's methods to achieve equality for all people. Through opposition from his peers and experiences of isolation and disappointment, King realized that the cause for which he was fighting was more important than his own personal pain. Being in jail and seeing the injustice of the government, Dr. King began to write around a newspaper where the white minister's story was published a black jail attendant gave him toilet paper and finally the SCLC

provided him a notepad.²⁵ This denial did not deter him from expressing his pain. He found something to write with and on in order to express himself to those religious leaders and to the entire nation.

All three historical figures examined here demonstrate the importance of pressing forward in the midst of hurt and disappointment knowing that God is the one who ultimately sustains you.

Luther, Lee and King are all examples of persons who have experience pain and hurt within the church. While disagreements are inevitable in human relationships, they can lead to separation and isolation in some cases. The end result can be someone being relegated to outcast status. Luther, Lee and King demonstrate that Godly purpose for one's life is motivation enough to press through life's disappointments.

Those who are hurt by others may never get the benefit of an apology from the offender. Those hurt may never hear the words "I am sorry," "I apologize for hurting you," or "Will you forgive me?" However, when a person focuses on Godly purpose in life, they can go on to accomplish great things like Luther, Lee and King. Like Luther through pain we can find the courage to challenge the Church. Like Lee through pain we can find the courage to preach the gospel. Like King through pain we can find the courage to write down our conviction for the world to read.

²⁵ S. Jonathan Bass, *BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS* Martin Luther King Jr., Eight White Religious Leaders and the "Letter from Birmingham Jail, (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2001), 117.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

Many books have been written to help persons understand God and their own religious beliefs. We are also able to see how our beliefs can be the reason others become hurt. It is my desire to show how theology can help others see who God is, what He can do and why we should trust Him.

There are many theological disciplines such as Christology, Feminist and Black theology. We are able to see how theology may impact not just our religious beliefs but also our cultural beliefs. Christology is the study of the life and work of Jesus Christ. Black Theology came to the forefront during the 60's and 70's civil rights movement. James Cone, who is one of the pioneers of Black theology said, "Black Theology cannot accept a view of God which does not represent Him as being for blacks and thus against whites..."¹ Feminist Theology is also known as Womanist Theology and crosses racial, socio-economic, state and international lines. Feminist Theology seeks to provide equality for women in society through the removal of obstacles which include, beliefs, values and attitudes which may try to stop the development of women in a leadership role.²

¹ Millard J. Erickson. *Christian Theology, Third Edition*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 540.

² Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology An Introduction*. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 88.

Three theological disciplines have been selected for this chapter. They are Biblical, Liberation and Systematic. Each one will be examined to help show how a person who has been hurt by members of the church, their family or friends can find healing and restoration.

Biblical Theology is based on faithful teachings of the Bible.³ Liberation Theology places emphasis on the oppressed, downtrodden and outcast.⁴ Systematic Theology seeks to draw biblical teachings and themes into a self-consistent, coherent whole.⁵

The goal of this chapter is to examine how these theological disciplines can provide information, solutions and direction for preaching, teaching and workshops in order to facilitate healing for those who have been hurt. I believe that through this research people will see how their beliefs can help them as they journey toward wholeness. The chapter will also examine how the traditions and sacraments of the church are tied to our personal theological beliefs which can provide comfort, peace, inspiration and knowledge.

Theological Foundation

Theology is the study and science of God. Yet it sometimes takes a personal relationship with God to reveal that theology is more than the study of God. It is an all-

³ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology, Third Edition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 11.

⁴ Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology An Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing: 2007), 90.

⁵ Major Contributors and Editors, "Systematic Theology," ed. John D. Barry et al., *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015).

encompassing journey to know God, how He works and our connection to Him.

Theology is drawn out of the experiences of persons who have had to wrestle with life encounters and needed a prescription to help enrich or restore their lives.

Theology is also what you believe and why you believe it. When we look at the world today and notice a lack of regard for human life it is easy to ask “If there was a God why would this be happening or why is that happening?” Fortunately, theology provides a framework to answer the questions of why people continue to hold on to hatred, oppression, slavery and suffering in the world.

The word theology comes from the Greek words Theos (deity) and logos (discourse). Therefore, theology seeks to answer the question of the existence and nature of God. Theology may be used to describe any study of God. Scripture comprises theology, with succinct descriptions of God and things related to God. The Bible is considered special revelation, inspired by God.⁶ In the book *Introduction of Theology*, Owen C. Thomas and Ellen K. Wondra, provide the definition of theology as the methodical investigation and interpretation of the content of Christian faith, the orderly clarification and explanation of what the Christian message affirms.⁷

To define theology is not a simple task, nor is it safe to say it is just a “discussion about God.” We see today “the word “theology” is followed by a genitive (e.g. of history, of liberation, of preaching), which has meaning only if it is supposed that theology is not

⁶ Don Thorsen, *An Exploration of Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2008), 4.

⁷ Owen C. Thomas and Ellen K. Wondra, *Introduction to Theology* (Harrisburg PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2002), 1.

just a question of God and his attributes.”⁸ All of these definitions may be summed up with the classical phrase of theology is “faith seeking understanding.”⁹

Biblical Theology

Biblical Theology includes the scriptures which our faith is based upon. Scriptures are also used to build us up and to empower us to be all that God has ordained and destined for our lives. As Christians the Scripture inform us who God is. The Scriptures also allow us to see how God has had relationships with the people in the Bible and how we are able to build our faith upon His written Word.

Biblical theology began with the history of the Israelites, and moved through the post-World War II period. At that time, we were impacted by such theologians as Karl Barth and Rudolf Bultmann. With the emphasis on history of the scripture and its archaic language, there have been discussions among theologians regarding the validity of scripture being a theological document. This is where we can unequivocally state since Jesus is the central focus of the Old and New Testament scriptures the Bible is considered a theological document.

There are several theologians who have argued the Old Testament is history and testimony of the history. This fact is what allows Biblical Theology to be so impactful because of the Old and New Testament scriptures whereby Christ is the subject in both; even though His name may not be mentioned in the Old Testament.

⁸ Zoltan Alszegehy and Maurizio Flick, *Introductory Theology* (Denville, NJ: Dimension Books, 1983), 12-13.

⁹ Daniel L. Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding an Introduction to Christian Theology*. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991), 2.

There is also a debate among theologians regarding the language of the Bible as it relates to feminist and liberationist reading of scripture. I believe the interpretation of the preacher or teacher must be grounded in scripture to empower and not divide.

Interpretation of scripture will always create certain questions. Even with the interpretation of the theologian, the Word of God is personal and must be received and adopted. Yet we must be careful to understand the interpretation heard is based on the experiences of the listener.

Biblical Theology allows a person to read God's word and find the answers for many questions which will help us establish the foundation to move forward. Who is the Church? What is the authority of the church? What is the role of the Church? What are the Sacraments of the Church? How can the relationship with believers impact our lives? With the answer to these questions, we will understand how Biblical Theology and Christian Theology help us develop our faith in God's Word which has the power to move us to a place of total wholeness.

Liberation Theology

Liberation Theology, which was birthed in Latin America, in response to the human suffering which was so evident there in the 60s and 70s. Gustavo Gutierrez introduced it as his belief that the church should be on the side of the poor. He wanted all to understand that theology is a "critical reflection on Christian praxis in the light of the Word of God."¹⁰ Jose Miguez Bonino, an Argentinean, states that theology cannot just be

¹⁰ Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology an Introduction, Fourth Edition* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 90.

something we explain. It must be a transforming agent which allows persons to see the plight of the poor and move to enlighten them to the knowledge of the Word.

Liberation Theology allows for scripture to show how persons who had been oppressed and placed on the outside of the city as outcast were liberated from their oppression, such as Israel who was in bondage in Egypt. The life of Joseph is another example because he was sold by his brothers, then sold into bondage, then sold again to Potiphar and he ends up in jail almost forgotten. In both of these examples both were in bondage. The Word of truth was spoken and Israel and Joseph were set free to complete their journey toward freedom (liberation). Liberation Theology allows a person who is oppressed and an outcast to see the scripture in the light of their situation. To see their situation in the light of scripture ultimately provides healing and restoration from pain which has caused hurt and separation. In the teachings and the writings of these theologians, people are told that Jesus was able to identify with their plight because He Himself was rejected by His family, He was deserted by His friends, and He was crucified by the religious leaders. Luke 4:18-19 says, "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." This Jesus who was introduced through Liberation Theology in Latin America is alive today, still speaking to those who need to be lifted from pain, hurt, separation and loneliness. Through Liberation Theology we are taught there is freedom for everyone who is able to grasp a hold on His Word, and this can be accomplished through the reading of scripture.

It is difficult to see Liberation Theology as only a focus in Latin America. However, when we view American history, Black Liberation Theology must also be experienced and represented at the theological perspective in the black community. There was a statement given by the National Committee of Black Churchmen with a central theme of black theology. Black Theology is a theology of “blackness.” “It is the affirmation of black humanity that emancipates black people from white racism, thus providing authentic freedom for both white and black people.”¹¹ Dwight N. Hopkins in his book *Introducing Black Theology of Liberation* wrote, “God wants the black poor and marginalized to be delivered from internal and external obstacles that would keep them from being completely what God has created them to be – full human beings able to reach their full God-given potential.”¹² Black Theology allowed an oppressed and outcast people to express their experience through songs, sermons, poetry, dance and prayers. Just as the Bible has Scripture which meets the need of every ethnic community, the Black community is able to see examples of God’s love for liberation. It is with this information modern theologians must continue to find a voice to speak, preach, and teach a Word which will empower all to be liberated.

Systematic Theology

Systematic Theology is a clear and organized outline of the main themes of the Christian faith. The Scripture is written and begins with the doctrine of God and then provides the creation and historical stories of Jesus Christ and concludes with

¹¹ Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology an Introduction, Fourth Edition* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 91-92.

¹² Dwight N. Hopkins, *Introducing Black Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999), 182.

eschatology. However, Karl Barth, a noted theologian claims there should be an order of reality that dictates the presentation.¹³ John Calvin one of the members of the Protestant Reformation says “the knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves” is so closely related we can begin anywhere. One of the suggestions of the order is that if you begin at the beginning you will get an understanding of who God is and then build your own theological foundation as you continue to read Scripture. There are many voices of how Scripture should be systematically presented. Schleiermacher felt human experience should be viewed over scripture or tradition. Ritschl spoke of the doctrine of the kingdom of God with an emphasis on “value-judgments.” Barth makes eschatology and the future the central emphasis of Christian theology. The consensus of the many voices allow persons to find creativity and liveliness which opens up Christianity to all.

It may be helpful to explore and propose solutions through these theological disciplines to help us find a way to move from the pain of our experience to a more productive and abundant existence based on Scripture.

For the sixteenth-century Reformers, the authority of scripture was rooted in its liberating message, in the good news of God’s gracious acceptance of sinners offered in Jesus Christ. The Bible was experienced not as an arbitrary or authoritarian power but as a source of renewal, freedom, and joy. Martin Luther wanted the people to see that the Word of God, scripture, had the power to free them from the bondage of the Catholic Church’s rules and regulations. This was one of the big controversies during the

¹³Donald W. Musser, and Joseph L. Price, Eds *New & Enlarged Handbook of Christian Theology*. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003).

Reformation period.¹⁴ The Word of God has that same power today amidst violence, confrontations, and murders with guns and our mouths. The ultimate goal is to reach a place of healing either directly or indirectly from the persons who injured us.

Once we are assured of our Biblical foundation, we can be empowered by Liberation Theology to move us from any frustration, confusion or hindrance to a place of healing and wholeness. Listed below are questions asked about the Church and responses to help us build a strong foundation in an attempt to build our beliefs.

Who is the Church?

The English translation of a Greek word (ekklesia) means “assembly” or “gathering.”¹⁵ The Church’s identity as the people of God is seen in terms of both Jewish and Gentile believers. Paul noted that the Gentiles have been “grafted on” to the people of God along with believing Israel (Roman 11:11-25).¹⁶ In the New Testament the word “church” always denotes a group of people, not a building. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus is presented as the one who founds the church (calling it “my church”); he refers to it as something that He will build, and He declares that “the gates of Hades will not prevail against it” (16:18).¹⁷

¹⁴ Donald K. McKim, *The Cambridge Companion To Martin Luther* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 95.

¹⁵ Ernest Best “Church” ed. Mark Allan Powell *The HarperCollins Bible Dictionary (Revised and Updated)* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2011), 134-135.

¹⁶ Chad Draper Brand, Charles & Englad, Archie. *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*. (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 295.

¹⁷ Ernest Best, “Church,” ed. Mark Allan Powell, *The HarperCollins Bible Dictionary (Revised and Updated)* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2011), 134-135.

In the beginning of early Christianity, house churches were used such as noted in Romans 16:5. “The Gospel of Matthew, composed in Antioch ca. 80-90, formulated an end to Israel’s tenure of the Old Testament title “people of God” and uses the term the church.”¹⁸

The term “Body of Christ ” is also used to identify persons in the Church. We may use this term to refer to Jesus’ statement about the Eucharist at the Last Supper when He said, “This is my body” in Luke 22:19-20. Paul also makes reference to the “Body of Christ” in I Corinthians when he refers to the Christian Church and the functions of each member. Many people call themselves Christians today. Many use this to identify with the Christian faith, yet many of those same people don’t attend worship service regularly. There are some who say they can worship God at home, and this is true, yet the Bible commands in Hebrews 10:25 “not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”¹⁹

What is the authority of the Church?

The ultimate source of Christian Theology is the Bible, which bears witness to the historical grounding of Christianity in the history of Israel and the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As is often pointed out, Christianity is about belief in a

¹⁸ Everett Ferguson, Editor. *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity, Second Edition*. (New York, NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1998).

¹⁹ Heb. 10:25 (NKJV)

person (Jesus Christ), rather than belief in a text (The Bible). Nevertheless, the two are closely interlocked.²⁰

The authority of the Bible is paramount for Christians to accept if they are going to rely on the authenticity of their belief. Daniel L. Migliore in his book *Faith Seeking Understanding* writes, “For the sixteenth-century Reformers, the authority of Scripture was rooted in its liberating message, in the good news of God’s gracious acceptance of sinners offered in Jesus Christ. The Bible was experienced not as an arbitrary or despotic authority but as a source of renewal, freedom, and joy.”²¹

The Bible for Christians provides a picture of a sovereign God who spoke to the people of Israel in the Old Testament and also speaks to us today. With the Protestant Reformation initiated against the Roman Catholic Church by Martin Luther (1438-1546), a challenge was posed against the authority of the Roman Catholic Church, pope, and magisterium to recognize the Bible as the final authority of how the church should function, not based on our own interpretation.

The Theology of the Reformers departed from the Roman Catholic Church primarily on the basis of three great principles.

- Sola Scriptura – Scripture as contained in the Bible is the only authority for the Christian in matters of faith, life, and conduct.
- Sola Fide – This doctrine maintains that we are justified before God by faith alone, not by anything we do, not by anything the Church does for us, and not by faith plus anything else.

²⁰ Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology an Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007).

²¹ Daniel L. Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding An Introduction to Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2014), 44.

- Priesthood of all Believers – This Scripture teaches that believers are a “holy priesthood,” I Peter 2:5. All believers are priests before God through our great high priest, Jesus Christ. “There is one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. I Timothy 2:5.”²²

As 2 Timothy 3:16 lets us know “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine for reproof for correction, for instruction in righteousness,”²³

These scriptures provide for all Protestant religions to hold to the foundation that the scripture which we read has everything we need to assist us for our life’s journey.

As a Christian in the Baptist tradition, we adhere to the strength of scripture. The primacy of scripture is one of the reasons for the Protestant Movement. This belief in the authority of the scripture was passed down through generations from Martin Luther to Protestants worldwide. As a Christian associated with The National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc., we stand on “What We Believe.” This authority of Scripture is an intricate part of the development and maintenance of the faith. The following statement regarding the scripture helps to fashion the organization’s belief of the importance of scripture along with every Baptist Church associated with the organization. The statement of belief concerning scripture is as follows, “We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us, and therefore is, and shall remain to

²² Protestant Reformation, accessed 12-30-2014, http://www.theopedia.com/Protestant_Reformation.

²³ 2 Tim. 3:16 (NKJV)

the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions shall be tried.”²⁴

As our generation has grown in knowledge, it is my intent to highlight the necessity of realizing how the church treats people. The Church may not realize that they are causing harm by not focusing on the needs of individual members. The mission of the Church is to fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus Christ through preaching, teaching, and healing. Church leaders must understand that the purpose of the church is not just to have worship, preach, teach to make the people feel good. The purpose of the church is also to empower them to be more like Christ who is our ultimate example of love, peace, unity, and wholeness. We should also accept when we have hurt a member and provide an opportunity to make things right by establishing forgiveness and restoration.

What is the role of the Church?

When we look at the role of the Church we must begin with the Great Commission given to the disciples after Jesus Christ’s resurrection, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.”²⁵

The church today more readily identifies as Christians rather than disciples. Just as the Great Commission was given to the disciples in Jesus’ day the purpose of the Church today is the same. The term “disciple” comes from a Latin root meaning “learner”

²⁴ The National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. accessed 12-30-2014, <http://www.nationalbaptist.com/>.

²⁵ The Holy Bible: King James Version, Electronic Edition of the 1900 Authorized Version. (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 2009), Mt 28:17–20.

or “pupil.” The term is virtually absent from the Old Testament, though there are two related references (I Chronicles 25:8; Isa 8:16).²⁶ Through a process of learning which would include a set meeting time and such pedagogical methods as questions and answer, instruction, repetition and memorization, the disciple would become increasingly devoted to the master and the master’s teaching.²⁷

It is instructive for the church of today to remember that Jesus Himself chose men who were flawed in various ways to be His disciples during His earthly ministry. Romans 3:23 clearly states, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”²⁸ This is why the Great Commission should be the primary goal of the church and not all the other activities people get involved in . There are persons who enter churches every Sunday looking for hope in order to survive the everyday challenges of their lives. They want to know if there is forgiveness for themselves and others. They need to feel empowered through the authority of the Word of God and Christians need to be the people who others can trust to be their support and strength. Whether people are members of the church or not, when they come to church people should not be able to say as they did in Matthew 17:16 “So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him.”²⁹ The church should be that place of healing, deliverance, and restoration for the world. If the world is going to get better, the Church must return to helping people living out the Great Commission. .

²⁶ Chad Draper Brand, Charles, England, Archie, Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 425

²⁷ Chad Draper Brand, Charles, England, Archie, Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 425

²⁸ Rom. 3:23 (NKJV)

²⁹ Mat. 17:16 (NKJV)

What does the Church do about those persons who stopped coming to church or even stopped believing in God? Some would consider that they are still part of the church. The church must reach out to those persons. The church must remind them that God is much more than the people in the church. This may allow them to see and believe in the almighty God who is able to bring clarity to their thoughts and answers to their questions. Some of those persons who do not choose to be a part of the Church because of hurt are deserving of our love and support as the Church. Christ showed His love for us by dying on a cross for sins He did not commit.

What are the Sacraments of the Church?

While proclamation of the Word of God is an indispensable means of grace, it does not exhaust the many ways in which the extravagant love of God is communicated to us. In addition to proclamation, there are sacraments. Sacraments are “visible words,” embodiments of grace, enacted testimonies to the love of God in Jesus Christ.³⁰ The sacrament is a Christian rite recognized as of a particular importance and significance.³¹ The common definition of a sacrament accepted by the Reformed and Roman Churches is that of an outward and visible sign, ordained by Christ, setting forth and pledging an inward and spiritual blessing. The definition owes much to the teaching and language of Augustine, who wrote of the visible form which bore some likeness to the thing invisible. When to this ‘element’, or visible form, the word of Christ’s institution was added, a sacrament was made, so that the sacrament could be spoken of as ‘the visible word’ (see

³⁰ Robert W. Jenson, *Visible Words: The Interpretation and Practice of Christian Sacraments* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1978), 279.

³¹ Robert W. Jenson, *Visible Words: The Interpretation and Practice of Christian Sacraments* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1978), 279.

Augustine, *Tracts on the Gospel of John* 80; *Epistles* 98; *Contra Faustum* 19. 16; *Sermons* 272).³²

The number of sacraments has varied in Christianity. Early Christians used the term to designate baptism. Later, this concept was extended to include the Lord's Supper. The Roman Catholic Church practices seven sacraments: confirmation, penance, ordination, marriage, last rites, baptism, and the Eucharist. Protestant Churches recognized only two ordinances: baptism and the Lord's Supper.³³

“The Scriptures teach that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer, in the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, with its effect, in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life. For new converts baptism is encouraged to gain the privileges of a church relation; and to the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is received by members of the church (of Jesus Christ) by the sacred use of bread and wine, in remembrance of the dying love of Christ; members are asked always to take a moment for solemn self-examination.”

Baptism is often observed in the old church format with the singing of “Take Me to the Water to be Baptized” with the deacons and leadership of the church leading this effort for those new converts displaying their death to the world and obedience to walk in this new life with Jesus Christ. The words often used during The Lord's Supper are, “As often as you do this you show forth my death until I shall come again.”

³² R. J. Coates, “Sacraments,” ed. D. R. W. Wood et al., *New Bible Dictionary* (Downers Grove, IL: Leicester, Eng: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 1034.

³³ R. J. Coates, “Sacraments,” ed. D. R. W. Wood et al., *New Bible Dictionary* (Downers Grove, IL Leicester, Eng: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 1428.

As we look at the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Church we must understand that the Catholic Church believes the sacraments are salvific. However, Protestants believe the ordinances are symbolic and done in obedience to the Word of God. These ordinances are frequent reminders of why we are Christians and what Christ's dying and resurrection has accomplished for the believer.

How Can the Relationship with Believers Impact Our Lives?

We human beings are a mystery to ourselves. We are rational and irrational, civilized and savage, capable of deep friendship and murderous hostility, free and in bondage, the pinnacle of creation and its greatest danger. We are Rembrandt and Hitler, Mozart and Stalin, Antigone and Lady Macbeth, Ruth and Jezebel. The Bible and Christian theology give expression to this mystery of the dignity and the danger of human beings in three related affirmations: we are created in the image of God; we are sinners who deny and distort our created being; and we are forgiven sinners, enabled by God's grace to begin life anew in faith, to serve as Christ's disciple in love, and to move in hope toward the promised fulfillment of life in the coming reign of God.³⁴

Mankind is complex and many times we are not able to express our joy and sorrow, our hurt and disappointment without inflicting pain or deceit upon someone else. The scripture tells us in Genesis 1:26 "Let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness...."³⁵ The body was formed out of the dust of the ground using pre-existing material. In the creation of the soul, however, there was no fashioning of pre-existing

³⁴ Daniel L. Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding An Introduction to Christian Theology*, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2014), 120.

³⁵ Gen. 1:26 (NKJV)

materials, but the production of a new substance. The soul of man was a new production of God in the strict sense of the word. Jehovah “breathed into his (man’s) nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”³⁶ We are made in the image of God’s likeness, not necessarily the physical image of God but with the characteristics of God. Therefore as the people of God, we have the responsibility to not hurt or destroy others made in the image of God. Instead we are to love, nurture and empower others. If we do hurt someone, we must look to the Word of God for the solutions to bring healing and restoration to the person we hurt.

Even though Jesus only lived for 33 years, he lived life to the fullest. Jose’ A. Pagola in his book *Believe Tell Me Why...* says “The first disciples of Jesus and the first generation of Christians had discovered a new way to live. They say they had received the Holy Spirit as the gift of God when they decided to follow Jesus.”³⁷ Do we as the Church feel that same excitement to talk, sing, and witness to others concerning why we are Christians, why we go to Church and why we love the Lord? Christians must be the first ones to show others that the church can be a place of healing, unity and growth.

Conclusion

Is there a possibility persons may be hurt by members of the church, their families, and friends? The answer is yes. In Genesis 16:5-11, Abram follows the suggestion of his wife Sarai and sleeps with her servant by the name of Hagar in hopes of fulfilling God’s promise to give them a promised seed of their own. In God’s time the promise was

³⁶ L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids. MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1928), 183.

³⁷ Jose’ A. Pagola, *Believe? Tell Me Why: Conversations With Those who Have Left The Church* (Miami, FL: Convivium Press, 2013).

fulfilled and Abram and Sari had a son born to them in their old age. Not according to Sarai's plan or Abram's actions but according to His divine plan. In Acts 15:36-41, there was tension between Paul and Barnabas because Paul refused to trust John Mark again after he abandoned a previous missionary trip. Because of this disagreement, Paul and Barnabas decided to go their separate ways. This probably impacted the church because this was two leaders at odds with each other. Scripture informs us in 2 Timothy 4:11 that Paul later says, "Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is useful to me for ministry." This was during the time Paul was in prison in Rome. We never hear of Paul and Barnabas reuniting.

If the Biblical references, the same hurt, disappointment, and pain must exist among the members of today's churches and between family and friends. We must be willing to acknowledge the pain and be willing to forgive and be forgiven by those who have hurt us. We must look for every opportunity to heal and be restored from those life's disappointments. With Liberation Theology we are able to see our wrong doing towards others through the lens of ethical integrity. We can then see how to provide a solution for restoration. According to an article by Dr. Richard J. Krejcir entitled *Statistics and Reasons for Church Decline*, "Every year, 2.7 million church members fall into inactivity. This translates into the realization that people are leaving the church. From our research, we have found that they are leaving as hurting and wounded victims-of some kind of abuse, disillusionment, or just plain neglect!"³⁸ Church for so many years provided a basis for the life of the American family. Unfortunately, today people find it hard to trust

³⁸ Richard J. Krejcir, Dr. Churchleadership.org, "Statistics and Reasons for Church Decline", accessed 1/1/2015, <http://www.churchleadership.org/apps/articles/default.asp?articleid=42346&columnid=4545>.

the men and women who mount the pulpit, usher at the door or sing on the choir because of the pain they may have incurred from a hurtful interaction with someone in the church.

To overcome pain, hurt, and disappointment there must be a theology which provides forgiveness, hope, and empowers individuals, families and friends to move forward. Everyone has a destiny. Everyone has a purpose. Everyone has value.

Anne Graham Lotz in her book *Discovering How God's Love Heals Our Hearts* helps us to maybe understand and accept our hurt and pain like this “Without wounds in life – or in mine or in yours – we would remain shallow, living on the surface of our relationship with God, and barren of any eternal, spiritual fruit.”³⁹

³⁹ Anne Graham Lotz, *Discovering How God's Love Heals Our Hearts* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishers, 2013).

CHAPTER FIVE

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter examines theories relevant to the focus of lessons and workshops given at the Shiloh Baptist Church of Baltimore County. This chapter also examines assumptions, biases, and generalizations often associated with the topic of being hurt. I will use information, other models and tested results to help the members of Shiloh Baptist Church recognize how important it is to acknowledge their pain and be able to move forward in the healing and restoration process.

This chapter will also examine the two disciplines of psychology and sociology. Also, this chapter will highlight with work of a relevant author who has developed a model to assist persons to move forward after a hurting and devastating situation in their lives using counseling and scripture as the foundation. Noted American psychologist Abraham Harold Maslow has written a document which speaks to the needs of persons and different levels. This information helps when trying to understand what motivates people. When people are hurt, they may act and or react differently. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs that says people are motivated based on if a need has been fulfilled.

Some of the experiences in church cause people to feel like an outsider or an outcast. It is not necessarily a response to a singular action and our response can determine what long-term negativity – if any – we will experience. When a person has been injured by the church the response by church leadership usually makes it extremely

difficult or impossible to deal with that action without including a number of factors that include:

- Your relationship to the one you perceived as hurting you
- The incident
- Those who observed the incident
- How the person who “hurt you” responds to your proclamation of the hurt
- Whether you perceive the incident as accidental or intentional
- Who, if anyone seeks to restore a viable relationship between you and the church and the success of that attempt
- Any public revelation of the experience.

The goal is to review and analyze the disciplines of psychology and sociology along with the information from chapter four to provide resources for teaching, preaching and workshops.

Theoretical Foundation

In an address to the Gettaskys Assembly, Marie Fortune who is the author of *Is Nothing Sacred: When Sex Invades the Pastoral Relationship*, ” provides a model of healing. According to Fortune, this model is necessary to meet the spirit needs in order to heal and to move on. Fortune attempted to show what people needed to recover from abuse and get on with their lives. The basic tenants of her discussion are applicable to the one who is attempting to heal from church hurt – whether it is from a church leader, church members, family, or friends. Her work substantiates the need for the individual to identify the hurt before the healing process can be contemplated. She purports

psychological foundations for her theory, even though she makes references to scripture. Fortune, in her work with survivors and victims of violence, indicates that recognition of what they need in their healing process must be ascertained, if the healing is to be complete. She found people rarely ask the victim what they need.

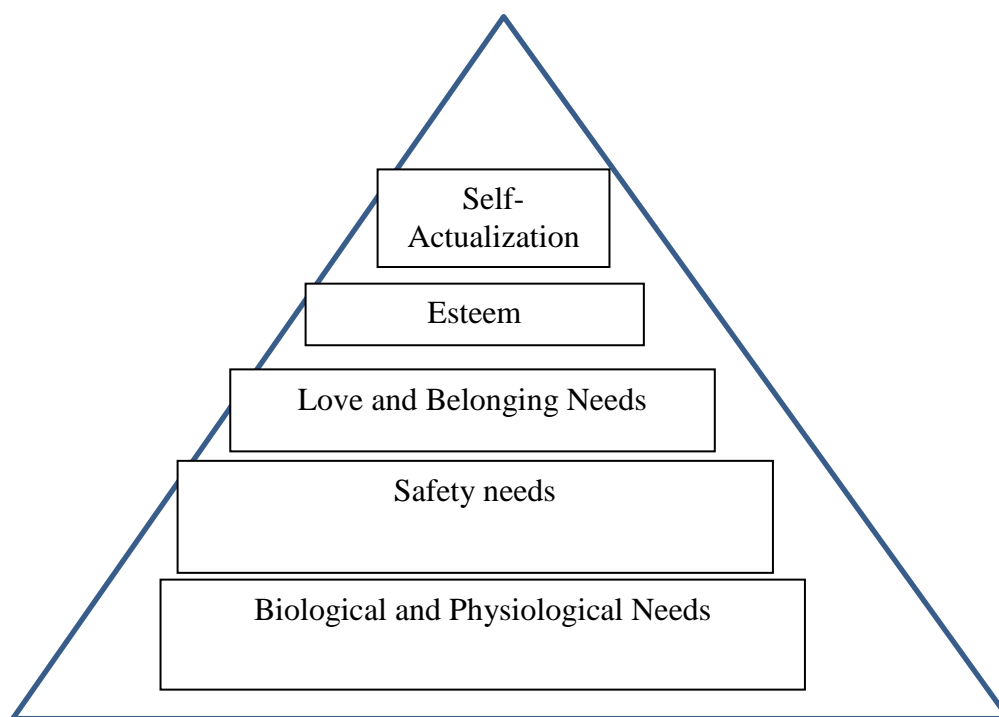
She indicates that the following steps are needed before the healing process can be complete:

- Truth-telling – where there is a chance for the person to speak the truth about what has been experienced; to tell their story.
- Acknowledgement – a chance to be heard and understood by someone that matters.
- Compassion – the person assisting’s willingness to “suffer with” the injured person
- Protect the Vulnerable – the ability to protect the person as they traverse the process and keep them from additional injury
- Accountability – to hold the perpetrator responsible for their deeds and to, minimally ascertain a confession and/or apology.
- Restitution – some compensation for the losses incurred by the injured party.
- Vindication – when the injured party is set free; the scars may remain but healing is sufficient so as not to continue to be held in bondage to the trauma.¹

This foundation for healing can also be drawn from Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs which states people process a set of motivation systems unrelated to rewards or conscious desires. He indicates that people are motivated to meet certain needs.

¹ Marie Fortune, Dr., “A Model for Healing,” accessed 3-21-2016, <http://www.geftakysassembly.com/Articles//Recovery/ModelForHealing.htm>.

When one need is fulfilled a person seeks to fulfill the next one, and so on. Finally, he indicates that failure to satisfy lower level basic needs before progressing on to meet the higher level growth needs results in inadequacy in the individual and/or failure. Though every person is capable of actualizing the hierarchy of needs, progress is often disrupted by failure to meet the lower level needs.² My research concludes that church hurt is a factor that can derail the process of achieving the highest level of growth. Maslow provides a pyramid to visualize his theory.



If the biological and physiological needs are met, the person is capable of moving on to esteem needs. The physical needs include air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sex, and sleep. These needs are the easiest for a church to meet. The difficulty for persons dealing

² McLeod Saul, "Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs," Simply Psychology, accessed 4-26-2016, <http://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>.

with church hurt becomes apparent in the area of safety needs. Safety needs are identified as the need for protection from elements, security, order, law, stability, and freedom from fear.³ The person who is dealing with hurting experiences will possibly lose stability because of a fear of the (1) perpetrator, (2) the response of those to whom they would report the hurt, (3) the church community, (4) the perpetrator's family, (5) their own family, or (6) the legal ramifications of making a report. When a person cannot move past this level, the effect could be catastrophic.⁴ It could possibly result in alienation, separation from the greater group, the person feeling and/or functioning as an outcast, physical and psychological problems for the individual, and – in extraordinary circumstances – death.

It is therefore essential that the church allow an atmosphere with appropriate intervention to free people to acknowledge and heal from hurt. It is my conclusion that failure to make the successful growth move in the area of safety becomes an even greater problem for church members when reaching additional areas of need are not possible. It may prove to be a hindrance as the church seeks to move forward and it will certainly be a hindrance to the victim, their family, and persons connected to them. Since the higher levels of growth culminate in self-actualization, the goal must be to reach the higher levels. If the individual's growth will not surpass this elementary level, they can never become a viable member of the church.

³ Saul McLeod, "Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs," Simply Psychology, accessed 4-26-2016, <http://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>.

⁴ Saul McLeod, "Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs," Simply Psychology, accessed 4-26-2016, <http://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>.

By thwarting the growth process at the lower end of the pyramid, we eliminate possibilities of self-actualization and we risk the possibility of a church that does not attract persons who are functioning at that level of self-actualization. It is my opinion that all persons are needed to make a viable Christian Community. I further believe that the resources of persons at the higher level are a necessary component to the financial viability of the community.

Once a person's Safety needs are met they are able to grow in the area of Social Needs. This is the area where love and belonging are paramount. This is also the area where friendship, intimacy, and affection are evidenced. Finally, this is the area where the love of the work group, family, and friends begins to be shown. Freedom from this constraint allows romantic relationships to flourish. All of these areas must be realized for the church to ultimately reach the goal of unity among all members. To understand this area of need and the consequences of failing to meet this need, we reach a deeper understanding of the issues facing churches.

We often find that our churches struggle with projects that need to be completed and many churches have been devastated because the need to borrow has limited their growth potential. Perhaps a failure to reach the Esteem growth level could be the cause of this problem. The Esteem Needs area include achievement, mastery, independence, status, dominance, prestige, self-respect, and respect from others. Individual achievement brings needed resources in terms of tithes and offerings. Tithes and offerings enable programmatic agendas to surpass fund raising efforts. When a person has self-respect and the respect of others, formulating agendas that benefit the church can become a focus. It

would be possible for pastors to put the emphasis where it needs to be and cut down on hindrances that thwart progress.

Self-Actualization needs include realizing personal potential, self-fulfillment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences. Meeting these needs is essential for the continued growth, progress, and stability of any church. Consequently, a limited focus on the wellness of the individuals in the church can only result in the diminished effectiveness of the total ministry.

For the purpose of this work, I am equating people who have been hurt with outsiders or the outcasts. Throughout this document I will use the term “hurt people/hurting people.” Just know that the symptoms are essentially the same as persons who see themselves as outsiders and outcasts. I have referred twice to how these people see themselves yet I want to make it clear that their perception many times has been substantiated by church leadership and/or the members of the congregations.

Pastors who injure members are usually honest people doing their best to shepherd the flock and to put food on their own table. We are not talking about pastors who are unfamiliar with persons in the congregation. We are talking about pastors who may or may not realize that they have caused injury to someone in the congregation. Often their insensitivity to the hurt is justification for their lack of acknowledgement of the pain. The “injured party” also usually assumes that their experience is worse than anything anyone else has ever experienced. This situation can cause a schism in the congregation whether the offended person remains or leaves. The problem is that even if they leave the person will tell someone else their side of the story without telling the side of the offending party.

The hurt that causes a person to feel like an outsider or an outcast can victimize the person or it can lead to the person choosing not to be a victim. David Burchett in his article entitled *When You're Hurt by the Church* suggests that you may have been abused (hurt) by leadership who should have restored you but instead chose to condemn you or worse. Or perhaps you have been neglected by churchgoers who should have cared enough to seek you out and return you to the flock. He goes on to say that these acts take place in the church, "But we must also acknowledge the real possibility that sometimes we choose to remain victims when we have the opportunity to move on."⁵ It is a waste of your spiritual potential to fixate on how events of the past could have or should have been different. Most of us who have been hurt could persuade any jury that the treatment we received from other Christians should have been different. No amount of time spent dwelling on how another sheep hurt us or should have done something different will change our present situation." He goes on to expound on the example of physical hurt and to insist that we would immediately "seek help." Then he suggests that church hurt is much like "being shot by the people in the church." David Burchett suggests that we "seek the Healer instead of focusing on the shooter."⁶

This work, therefore seeks to encourage persons who have been hurt by the church, family or friends to focus on forgiving, healing and restoration. Persons will be better to themselves and with themselves if they decide not to carry the baggage of past hurts.

The question for the church then is what to do when people are hurt in the church? In this work I will seek to provide ideas for thought, not specific answers. This is because

⁵ Dave Burchett, "When You're Hurt by the Church," Leadership Journal, Christianity Today, accessed 12-15-2015, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/le/2007/july-online-only/101304a.html>.

⁶ Dave Burchett, "When You're Hurt by the Church," Leadership Journal, Christianity Today, accessed 12-15-2015, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/le/2007/july-online-only/101304a.html>.

each church is demographically different. Therefore, any programs designed must reflect that reality. However, any program should be designed to (1) identify, (2) comfort, and (3) acquaint the persons with the healing power of the Lord Jesus.

When there is a hurt, disappointment, abandonment and/or rejection from the church, family or friends, persons may become bitter and angry. Stephen Mansfield in his book *Healing Your Church Hurt* states, “No local church will ever be perfect as long as people are part of it. In our thirst to experience the righteousness of God, we sometimes forget that we have the capacity to wound others, even in a spiritual environment, as well as a higher-than-desirable probability of being wounded by a community of faith.”⁷ Those congregants who once were faithful attendees and tithers look for another place of worship or find themselves not attending any church at all.

To begin the healing process, the specific hurt must be acknowledged by the people who have been affected and or those people who have caused the pain. There must also be a process established to allow all parties to come together to forgive and be restored. If the possibility of coming together is not an option because of death or just the refusal of someone to admit any wrongdoings, people must receive assistance in their effort to move forward not allowing these acts of pain to impede their progress. Many people have been hurt by people outside of the church as well. They have been hurt by family and or friends who inflicted pain on them. This pain may be even more devastating because of the familial connection shared by victim and perpetrator.

This project was birthed out of a personal experience. There are also examples of others who have been documented in the Biblical, Historical and Theological sections of

⁷ Stephen Mansfield, *Healing Your Church Hurt What to do When You Still Love God but Have Been Wounded by His People* (Austin, TX: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2010).

this work. It is the intent of this project to highlight the goals and objectives to identify different hurts and provide evidence and resolutions, and solutions for personal healing and restoration.

How many times have you been rejected because of a disagreement between leaders of the church, persons in your home, or persons at your place of employment? Because of this situation, people can find themselves negatively impacted or deterred from performing an assignment. We can be quick to say all hurt does not stop the plan of God for our lives. However, the pain of these types of situations may delay the manifestation of the promises for your life. People can be encouraged by Rick Warren who says, “A delay is not a denial from God.”⁸

This project will help to illuminate hurts which have impacted people and recommend solutions for restoration and healing. It is instructive to research previous work done in this area. This will also include personal interviews with persons who have experienced hurt in order to glean from their personal insight on how to resolve the hurt. Ultimately, a workable process will be established to assist persons in achieving healing and restoration after experiencing hurt inflicted upon them. Although all of the results may not be new, the combination of other documented results and personal interaction with persons who have been hurt should provide a new alternative to being made whole. Sometimes the things we say and or our physical response to others does not reflect the inner turmoil hurt people feel. This research along with a documented process and a plan for healing and restoration will be a guideline for persons who need a systematic,

⁸ Rick Warren, Pastor Rick’s Daily Hope, “A delay is not a denial from God,” accessed 5-21-2014, <http://rickwarren.org/devotional/english/a-delay-is-not-a-denial-from-God>.

Christian based foundation. This effort is designed to educate and equip persons to heal as they seek to attain that place in God for which He has destined them.

We often hear the Church is a hospital where souls who are hurt, heavy laden, and needing a touch for healing and deliverance come. In an article from the Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church, the unnamed author reminds us, “It is extremely important that we never abandon this role and outlook on the Church as a spiritual hospital. If we give up on it, then the Church becomes nothing other than a worldly institution.”⁹

The Theological Foundation research is to enable people to know they are not exempt from hurting and being hurt. Ideally we want both the inflictors of hurt as well as those who have been hurt to experience healing and restoration. The Bible provides examples of people who have experienced intentional pain and also the consequences of how a particular action or reaction may impact another person. There are two perspectives as it relates to hurt: disappointment and abandonment.

In our churches, families, and among our personal relationships today we still see the kind of pain that Hagar experienced from abuse, misuse of authority, and rejection. When pain is inflicted upon people and they feel there is no hope of healing and restoration, Lotz reminds us as hurt as you are by church people or family and friends remember “your relationship with God is strong enough and your understanding of His Word

⁹ Saints Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Church, “The Church as a Hospital”, Taken from “Gifts of the Dessert.” accessed 11-13-2014, <http://www.schwebster.org/about-orthodoxy/the-church-as-a-hospital>.

thorough enough to know that being rejected by people does not mean you are rejected by God.”¹⁰

. After researching several sources, it was repeated that there are four sources which have been acknowledged within the Christian tradition whereby persons will rely on for growth, development, inspiration, healing, and restoration, “Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience.”¹¹

- **Scripture** – McGrath in his book *Christian Theology* says The Bible is a “body of texts which is recognized as authoritative for Christian thinking (although the nature and extent of that authority is a matter of debate.)”¹² The Bible consists of two sections the “Old Testament” which is according to an article by Anne Phillips and Demand Media *Four Sources of Christian Theology* “is mostly shared with the Jewish people.”¹³ Whereas McGrath in his book sees The Old Testament “as setting the scene for the coming of Jesus, who brings its leading themes and institutions to fulfillment.”¹⁴ Also included in The Bible is the “New Testament” which begins with the four Gospels,

¹⁰ Anne Graham Lotz, *Discovering How God’s Love Heals Our Hearts* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishers, 2013), 124.

¹¹ Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology an Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2007), 105.

¹² Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology an Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2007), 121.

¹³ Anne Phillips, Opposing Views, “Four Sources of Christian Theology,” accessed 11-17-2014, <http://people.opposingviews.com/four-sources-christian-theology-7593.html>.

¹⁴ Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology an Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2007), 121.

which many Christians have been told means “good news.”¹⁵ The Gospels speak of the life of Jesus Christ from birth to his death and resurrection. Then the remaining books of the “New Testament” provide information regarding the beginning of the “Church” on to the spreading of Christianity shared by men who were directly or indirectly influenced by Jesus Christ. Finally the last book of the “New Testament” Revelation speaks of the “end of history which allows the reader to get a glimpse of heaven, that city called “New Jerusalem” which is being prepared for believers.”¹⁶

Then Bradley C. Hanson in his book *Introduction to Christian Theology* lets us know “The “Old Testament” and the “New Testament” “is a crucial source in Christian theology....because Christian faith is communicated mainly through the stories of Israel and of Jesus.” He goes on to remind us, “Christian faith has been created anew in each generation through the biblical story as it has been retold in families and churches down through the centuries.”¹⁷

- **Tradition.** Traditions are not foreign to individual families or the Church. The traditions we are speaking about for this project are “beliefs shared with past generations and handed on to succeeding ones, and to the process by

¹⁵ Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology an Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2007), 122.

¹⁶ Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology an Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2007), 123.

¹⁷ Bradley C. Hanson, *Introduction to Christian Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1997), 6.

which those beliefs are transmitted.”¹⁸ From traditions, watching our parents and grandparents pray and attend church we observe those and it impacts and informs our lives.

- **Reason.** In my searching for answers to this component, I was totally amazed at how much conflict, confusion, and tension surround it. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary describes faith for this concept as “belief in the existence of God: strong religious feelings or beliefs.”¹⁹ In the same dictionary reason is defined as “a statement or fact that explains why something is the way it is, why someone does, thinks, or says something, or why someone behaves a certain way.”²⁰ In the article *Four Sources of Christian Theology*, authors Anne Phillips and Demand Media states, “both Christians and non-Christians – consider reason to be the opposite of faith.” They go on to say, “Christians do not believe that reason is infallible.”²¹
- **Experience.** There is always a profound statement to help us center in on what is important and Bradley S. Hanson in his book *Introduction to Christian Theology* says, “We do not come to Christian theological reflection as blank slates; we come marked by our past experiences.” He goes on to say “We are

¹⁸ Donald W. Musser and Joseph L. Prices, Eds. *New & Enlarged Handbook of Christian Theology* (Nashville TN: Abingdon Press, 2003), 516.

¹⁹ Merriam Webster Online, accessed 11-19-2014, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/faith>.

²⁰ Merriam Webster Online, accessed 11-19-2014, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reason>.

²¹ Anne Phillips, Opposing Views, “Four Sources of Christian Theology,” accessed 11-17-2014, <http://people.opposingviews.com/four-sources-christian-theology-7593.html>.

not simply products of our past experiences, but they certainly influence how we look at the Christian faith.”²²

We should be able to see from these sources at different times in our lives how we have been impacted by each of them. Christian Theology allows us to view each segment which may help us to identify possible hurt in our lives.

As the Church of Jesus Christ it is imperative that we remember we will all experience life challenges. In the Old and New Testament there are stories of persons who have been killed, betrayed, deceived, and even used to enhance the agenda of a leader, a family member or a friend. However, in spite of all their challenges eventually they won. Some had to experience pain, forgiveness and even death sometimes. Yet restoration was achieved through the scriptures or even through the messenger of God. God sent an angel to Hagar and gave her a message that she and her son would be cared for even though He was not her God. There is no known account of how Paul and John Mark’s relationship was restored. However, in Colossians 4:10 Paul makes mention of John Mark who sends greeting. This confirms that there has been some communication and healing achieved.

As leaders we are to care for our congregants, not use them or hurt them. As family members we are to nurture our loved ones just like an eagle nurtures her chicks. We are to teach them, empower them, and then to release them. As friends we should enhance the relationship with words of encouragement and even reprimand if needed.

²² Bradley C. Hanson, *Introduction to Christian Theology*, (Minneapolis, IN: Fortress Press, 1997), 8.

Conclusion

Scientific and biblical information is needed to be sure a person has really understood their pain and has a desire to be made whole. For years it was believed that church members do not need to seek help outside of the Word of God. However, there are areas and levels of pain which need professional counseling in order to achieve healing.

According to Maslow's pyramid, the needs of a person not being met may cause that person to blame or accuse someone of wrong doing. This is why it is so important to have conversations with persons who you feel have hurt you to gain an understanding of why the person did what they did and allow them the opportunity to provide an explanation which may resolve the hurt. Unfortunately, people have a tendency to tell other people about their hurt which causes dissension and division in the church and among the congregants.

It is always important to discover the cause of hurt and pain. It should be determined if it is a misunderstanding on the part of the recipient or a spiteful act on the part of the offender. With these theories and scripture, I will utilize this information to inform my teaching and preaching. This information will also provide additional data for workshops designed to help those experiencing pain. With both of the theological disciplines we are able to use both in the workshops along with certified counselors to assist persons as they begin the process of acknowledging their pain as documented in the hypothesis.

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Introduction

Many persons have been hurt by members of the church, their family or from friends. They come to church Sunday after Sunday burying their pain. This pain is affecting them either physically, spiritually or emotionally. I was personally affected by a former pastor's efforts to destroy my father's character and hinder the new church that my father started. My family and those families who joined with this new ministry were ridiculed from the pulpit of the home church. The actions would not have been as hurtful had the attempt been unsuccessful. These efforts were apparently acceptable to a congregation where some of the members felt pride in what my father was doing and some even supported his decision. When my father began his church I was eleven years old. Maybe I was too young to understand all the ramifications of my father's decision. I definitely did not understand why our former pastor did what he did and the resulting pain was indelibly etched into the psyche of all of us. While we all were hurting, we never stopped to discuss or communicate our pain with each other. We worked very hard to make sure the ministry would be successful but we never addressed our pain.

As I began to recall my life's story, a plethora of memories magnified the pain, bitterness, anger and confusion. The plethora of information began to unnerve me and I wondered if I would be able to complete this project. As I looked back over my life it became clear that I had experienced "church hurt." It also became clear that there are

persons coming to church who have experienced hurt also. Sometimes people must pass by the very persons who hurt them without a hope of these persons ever apologizing for their actions. There are some hurtful emotions experience because of family situations or disagreements. A person can also be because of betrayal by a trusted friend. Whatever the cause of pain might be, there can be healing and restoration for those who have been victimized.

The purpose of the Bible Study, interviews and workshop was to discover, gather and develop data from the participants to test the hypotheses and to gather information for future teaching and workshops. Based on information given from each group the goal was to identify persons who have experience hurt from church, family or friends. From the data gathered the information would provide acknowledgement that the participant had been hurt and was or is still experiencing pain. That knowledge would help the participant determine if they were an outcast. The project hypothesis was that if a person is able to acknowledge the hurt they have experienced then they will be able to begin the healing and restoration process. The realization of that hurt is the catalyst that begins the healing process. The acknowledgement is sometimes the hardest step. I believe once the acknowledgement is made, whether verbally or in writing, significant progress has already been made and the person can now move to the next level. At this stage a person is moving towards healing and restoration, although complete wholeness has not been realized yet. The continued progress will ultimately result in physical, spiritual, and emotional healing.

While navigating through this doctoral program I have had opportunities to listen to preachers, teachers and mentors who have encourage me to look inside myself to find

the source of the hurt and pain. They have encouraged me through the Word to find healing and restoration. Although I may never hear an apology from the persons who hurt me, I have been able to hear God say “come to me all ye who labor and are heavy laden.”

During the January 2016 Intensive Dr. Charles Booth preached a sermon titled “Risky Business” from Mark 6:17-20. In that sermon he admonished students to preach the Word of God to those who are hurt and experiencing injustice not just in the world but also in the Church. He let preachers know if they preach about the injustice which is prevalent in our churches today, we may make enemies. However, we must address the elephant in the room which is racism, sexism and injustice. He let us know “birth defects are not healed, they are tolerated.” Therefore, when we experience pain from a hurtful situation or circumstance, we must realize the pain will not go away with just ignoring the person or the situation. We must be willing to face the problem and ask God for direction so we can move forward in life. In my situation, I had to acknowledge I had been hurt and I needed to identify the persons who hurt me. It took a very long time for me to fully acknowledge that I still had feelings of pain and hurt which were buried deep down in my heart. After acknowledging the hurt, I recognized it was time to deal with the pain of these experiences and time to move in the direction of total healing and restoration.

Methodology

The primary methodology of this study was qualitative. Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals, or groups ascribe to a

social or human problem.¹ This strategy of inquiries, which included (1) teaching, (2) interviews, and (3) a workshop was designed to explore a person's initial and long-term reaction to the hurtful situation and to assist in initiating steps that could lead to restoration. The expectation is that continued interventions – at the conclusion of the initial phase –will result in either a follow-up presentation or a workbook for use by ministry workers which enables testimonials of how persons have been set free from “hurt.”

There were three methodologies used to gather data for analysis: bible study, interviews and a workshop. There were two bible studies for the woman's group. The fundamental knowledge was gained from the Old Testament passage of Genesis 16:5-11. From this passage, the goal was to teach on the topic of “hurt” with the emphasis on family, church and friends.

The outgrowth of these methodologies was to be a workshop designed to gather additional support for the hypothesis. I asked for workshop volunteers to assist in gathering information from persons who had been hurt either by the church, family or a friend. I also wanted to identify persons who were still feeling that pain and felt like an outcast because of it. Also, I wanted to have persons attend who had experienced pain, had acknowledged their pain and were currently working towards healing. We were unable to get volunteers for this workshop. I was disappointed that people refused to participate in the project because I knew it was much needed within the congregation.

Since the original plan to have several workshops did not work out, I had to look at another avenue for gathering data to quantify results and gain information to analyze

¹ John W. Creswell, *Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2014), 4.

and publish. I then requested the assistance of several pastors who started a ministry while a member of an established church. The pastors were asked to answer several interview questions regarding the move from their home church to begin their own ministry. It was my intent to gather data regarding how the pastor felt leaving their home church and whether there was any pain experienced with this move. The questions revolved around the move, the support and the success of the effort. This was an attempt to ascertain their ability to find healing from the pain and whether fellowship with the former church had been restored. This was successful. Twelve packets were sent out to the pastors and seven pastors responded with a 58% return rate. Five males and two females participated.

A workshop was given titled “A Model for Restoration and Healing from the Pain of an Outcast.” This workshop also spoke to persons who had been hurt by church, family or friends. This workshop included a pre-test survey, teaching and a post-test survey. My intent was to gain information which would enable people to acknowledge their hurt begin the process of healing and restoration.. Also, I wanted to ascertain whether these persons felt like they were outcasts because of the hurt they experienced.

A pre-test survey was given. Then a lesson was taught. Finally, a post-test survey was given. I believed these three methodologies would assist in evaluating the design and would also be useful in formatting future workshops and writing a manual to be used by other churches.

Implementation

The woman's bible study consisted of two one-hour sessions with twenty participants. Using the Genesis 16:5-11 text, I taught concerning the pain experienced by Hagar because of Sarai and Abram. It was also intended for them to discuss their own experience of being hurt by church members, family or friends. The lesson covered the entire spectrum of interaction between Hagar, Sarai and Abram. This included the relationship between Abram and Sarai, Sarai and Hagar and Hagar and Abram. We also discussed their interaction and relationship with God.

This was also an opportunity for the women to express any pain they may have experienced from a hurtful time in their lives. Also, I wanted to know if the pain had been acknowledged before or after the teaching. It was important to identify the person who had hurt them, and determine if they had received forgiveness. Finally, I wanted to know if any of the women had begun their healing process so I could document what they had done up to this point.

I gave the post-test survey to the women after the second Bible study. There was not enough information documented to measure the data from the questions asked. During a follow up meeting, I queried the women for clarification of their understanding of the Bible study and also their reasons for providing the answers to the survey questions. The consensus of the group was they understood the Bible study and appreciated the teaching. They were not sure whether to answer the questions based on the Bible study or their own experience. I apologized to the group for not giving clearer directions. I thanked the women for participating and there were no further discussions.

The interviews with the founding pastors were successful. Twelve pastors were mailed the interview questions. Seven pastors answered the interview questions which represented a return rate of 58%. The participants included two women and five men. Their answers have been quantified for the purpose of this work. Note that no judgments have been made concerning the authenticity of their responses and no attempt was made to assist the responder in “seeing the experience” in a new or different manner. It is necessary to repeat gathering information from founding pastor (s) was not the researcher’s original plan to obtain information. It is important to note that my experience in this area was the catalyst for the inquiry. When my father began his work fifty-one years ago our family was keenly aware of the disparaging response of the former pastor and we felt my father’s pain as he began the church. We were ostracized by the former congregation and treated like outcasts because there were no financial remunerations coming back to the home church. Members of the former church were chastised for even visiting or having any relationship with us and a rift developed that would take almost twenty years to mend.

While doing these interviews my concerns were whether the truth of the respondent’s statements would shed any light on the possible “hurt they felt” and whether that light would enable an understanding that could be translated into a mechanism for assisting others as they handled “church hurt.” A question of whether a church starts off being healthy or whether a healthy church is developed is central to an understanding of this church hurt. If the axiom “hurting people hurt people” is true it leads to a myriad of concerns including whether a church born out of hurt can fully address the pain and feelings like an outcast of a hurting people. To address that concern additional

investigation is necessary. For the purpose of this work, the focus was to have the pastors' focus on specific areas of development and reflect on the effect it had on them and their family. I choose the following areas because universal responses could be quantified and a consensus of opinion could be ascertained:

- Motivating factors and considerations,
- Support from your previous pastor,
- Impact on the family,
- Disagreements concerning the new ministry,
- Present relationship with former pastor,
- What would you have done differently,
- How do you feel about God's timing in your call to ministry?
- How were you strengthened, and what do you feel were the benefits of this experience?

The results of this study will be provided in the summary of learnings.

The final data gathering was a workshop held at the Shiloh Baptist Church. Persons were invited to the workshop entitled "A Model for Restoration and Healing from the Pain of an Outcast." We had thirty-one participants, twenty females and eleven males. The participants were given a pre-test survey to complete. The pre-test survey asked questions regarding demographics gender, age classification, ethnicity, education and household composition. The participants were also asked several questions to help the researcher solidify their understanding of an outcast, pain and forgiveness:

- Have they ever felt like an outcast?
- What is the scale of their pain level?

- How has their life been affected by this issue? and
- How has their relationship with God been affected by this issue?

I taught from Genesis 16:5-11 and Acts 15:36-41. It was important for the participants to understand the characters in the text were a female and a male. From these two passages the emphasis was on Hagar and John Mark.

Once the teaching was complete we had a discussion of how the participants related to the characters in the text in relationship to their painful experience. During the discussion some persons acknowledged they had been hurt and let us know some of the things they had done to find healing and restoration. This was documented to be used in the assistance of a future manual for teaching and workshops. A post-test survey was given after the discussion. The questions asked in this section were:

- Did this workshop allow you to acknowledge you had been hurt?
- Is the persons who hurt you still alive?
- Is the pain as fresh today as the day of incident?
- Are you willing today to being the healing process?
- Is there anything I can do to assist with you moving forward to healing and restoration?

The results of the surveys will be discussed in the summary of learnings section.

Summary of Learnings

Research for this project has been very enlightening. Data collected from the Bible study, interviews with the pastors and the workshop helped me to confirm my hypotheses:

- There are persons coming to church each Sunday in pain and are not able to verbalize what and how they feel;
- (2) There are persons who have been hurt by persons in the church, by family or by friends who avoid communication at any level with the persons who hurt them and
- (3) There are persons serving in positions in the church who are not as effective in their interaction with others because of their own hurt which has not been dealt with.

Bible Study

For this workshop there was no pre-test survey given. This was an omission on my part. If a pre-test survey had been provided it may have helped to focus the group's attention to gain the desired results. The lesson was taught from Genesis 16:5-11. There was a discussion during the lesson and it appears persons understood the reason for the teaching and the survey information which was needed after the teaching. A survey was given at the end of the Bible study with instructions to answer the questions based on their experiences and the lesson taught. After reviewing the survey questions, it is apparent the questions were not designed in a manner that would provide appropriate data. The survey did not produce results that would assist the class in acknowledging their pain, or identifying the persons who hurt them. There was discussion during the Bible Study around the character Hagar and the position she was placed in. It was understood even though not agreed upon by all why Sarai sent Abram to Hagar to have a baby. There was also discussion regarding the interaction between Sarai and Hagar after

Hagar became pregnant. Finally, we could see the hand of God in Hagar's favor when He sent a messenger to affirm to her. He saw her plight and He would take care of her and her son Ishmael. I understood after this class that I needed to fine-tune future questions to gather the proper data.

Interview of Pastors

I learned from the founding pastors that some behaviors of senior pastors have not changed in over a fifty-years. There are still pastors who mentor men and woman to be leaders but when it's time for them to be elevated the senior pastor sometimes feels threaten and becomes angry with the mentee. Below are the results of the questions which were asked to the pastors. There has not been a follow-up meeting to discuss their results at this time. After reviewing the Bible study results I wrote an introductory letter to each pastor that accompanied the survey form to provide directions for completing the survey. I felt this was vital to the receipt of quantifiable data. The results are as follows:

- Motivating factors and considerations – The majority of the respondents saw God's conviction as their motivating factor. No attempt was made to determine the rational for dissatisfaction with the previous ministry. Only one pastor began a ministry in response to a specific need in an underserved community.
- Support from your previous pastor -- When addressing the level of support from the former pastors more than 60% of the respondents indicated the lack of financial support. Emotional support was indicated by 35% of the respondents. Three of the respondents indicated that their former pastor was deceased. One of the pastors failed to elaborate on the relationship even though the pastor's death

happened within the past year. In summary, only 43% of the respondents indicated a positive relationship with their former pastor. Of the ones with no relationship with their former pastor 43% of the respondents indicated that their former pastor was deceased.

- Impact on the family – When responding to the effect on the family 62.5% of the respondents indicated that the experience was a positive one with their families becoming stronger. One-third of the families (32.5%) were negatively affected. In that group one respondent did not respond to the question.
- Disagreements concerning the new ministry – 42.5% of the respondents stated they did not have a disagreement with their former pastor in establishing their new ministry. 42.5% also stated they did have a problem with their former pastor in establishing their ministry. However, they did not provide any detailed information. There was one person who did not respond.
- Present relationship with former pastor – In this section suggestions were given to quantify the data as it relates to the relationship with the founding pastor. The results are as follows: one pastor has an excellent working relationship with his pastor, one pastor's relationship with his pastor is a satisfactory working relationship, one pastor has no relationship with his former pastor and two pastors' former pastor is deceased. Two pastors did not respond.
- What would you have done differently? – When asked what they would do differently, 43% of the respondents indicated that there was nothing they would do differently. Interestingly enough when they commented on the question 28.7% of the respondents said that they would do more planning. Another 28.7%

indicated that they would handle personal issues before embarking upon the new venture. Only 14% felt that additional investigation was needed. A specific area of investigation such as demographic, economic or social needs was not indicated. Though reading the responses would lead me to question the investigation of the financial viability of the venture, it appears the pastors did not determine if anything was needed per their documentation. This is a topic to discuss during a follow up meeting.

- How do you feel about God's timing in your calling? – 86% of the respondents felt that they made the move to start the ministry in "God's time" and that "God's Timing" is perfect.
- How were you strengthened and what do you feel were the benefits of this experience? – 28.6% indicated there was a personal benefit to them and their family with the beginning of their new ministry. 43% indicated that they were strengthened (they did not provide specifically how they were strengthened). This lack of information may have been based on the question not being specific enough to gather that data. 14% indicated that they were better able to relate to people and the community. 14% indicated that their faith was strengthened.

After reviewing the results seven pastors began a new ministry and felt they did not have the full support of their pastor and/or home church congregation. This had to have an effect on them, their family and the congregation. However, each of them indicated they were strengthened by the experience and their family was able to grow and stay together. The average of time for the founding pastors is five years. This project helped some of

the pastors to face some of the issues they had not dealt with. A follow-up interview will be held with the pastors. (Letter and survey is attached in Appendix section)

Workshop

The worship which was held at the Shiloh Baptist Church of Baltimore County was initiated to have a triangulation of information for this project. By using this additional source of data gathering we are able to see how the information from different groups may be used to provide a model for teaching and workshops. The results of this workshop are listed below with the questions from the pre-test survey and post-test survey, along with the demographics.

Pre-test Survey Results

- Participants – twenty females, eleven males.
- Age ranges (1) 18-24, (4) 25-34, (2) 35-44, (7) 45-54, (7) 55-64, (8) 65-74, (2) over 75.
- Ethnicity – all participants were African-American.
- Education – (3) high school, (11) some college, (4) trade school, (1) associate degree, (8) bachelor's degree, (4) professional degree.
- Household composition – (6) single, (15) married, (5) widowed, (4) divorced, (1) separated.
- 90% felt like an outcast at one time from church, family or friends.
- The average level of pain from a hurtful situation was a seven.

- 18% of the respondents were lacking faith during this time because they felt God was not working things out for them. 24% of the respondents felt they gained a closer relationship with God.

Post-test Survey Results

- 90% of the respondents thought the workshop was helpful.
- 87% responded that the person who hurt them is still alive.
- 84% of the respondents felt the pain is as fresh today as the day they were hurt.
- 81% of the respondents are willing to acknowledge the pain and begin the healing process.
- 60% of respondents asked for assistance so they could move forward.
- One person actually came to me and requested counseling and she was referred to a counseling agency.

Conclusion

Through the writing of my Spiritual Autobiography I have uncovered layers of pain associated with experiences that made me feel like an outcast. Through my research I have discovered within the life of the church there are many people who also have experienced pain and have not acknowledged the pain which have made them feel like an outcast too.

As I entered United Theological Seminary I felt there was more I could learn, and more personal growth opportunities for me to experience never realizing there was also

some emptying out of hurt which caused pain I was not able to communicate to anyone. I found myself in a place isolated and feeling like an outcast. Oh I was living but not the total plan God had for my life. Going through this process, I never expected a total breakdown of emotions and feelings from my life experiences that at times in my life I could not see God and felt rejected by the church.

After writing my spiritual autobiography while looking back over my life; even with my most recent life experience I know why I am here to be free from the hurt and pain inflicted upon me by the church, family and friends. This project will allow me to build a foundation for future teaching, preaching and workshops to help others experience life without fear guilt or shame.

There was pain deep inside of me which lay dormant for years. It was the pain of being hurt by a preacher, not physically but emotionally. The pain of seeing my parents be ridiculed for loving God and wanting to move forward in ministry. The pain of hearing things said about our new church which was untrue, yet people we trusted believed it and distanced themselves from us.

There was the pain of divorce, sixteen years of marriage dissolving before my eyes. I prayed that God would allow us to be able to stay together and work through our problems with the help of prayer, and counseling, it never happened. I was confused where was God when I needed Him? Why did God not answer my prayers? Why did God let me suffer the pain of raising two children without the support and help of their father, why?

Then there was the pain of a friend taking advantage of my vulnerability for their own satisfaction. I wanted a friend I could confide in, someone who would be there for me in

those rough times, to speak hope, love and care. That never happened even today I cannot even stand to be in their presence or to hear their voice. Please do not judge me.

I have been in church all of my life. I am a preacher's kid (PK). Therefore I have been around church people all of my life. My mother had thirteen sisters and brothers and my father was raised with twenty-one siblings (a blended family). With church and family members I have had the opportunity to learn how to interact with different attitudes behaviors and personalities yet I find myself alone, isolated, in a place of an outcast. I had always limited myself to a few friends I was not sure why, through this process I now understand this was and is a protection mechanism for my heart and my soul.

This project has impacted every aspect and relationship in my life. As the scriptures tell us "it does not yet appear what we shall be." We often use this scripture to help us reach a place in ministry; I have found comfort in this scripture so I may find my place not just in ministry but in life. I know that as a result of this experience I will reach a level of self-actualization that I would not have reached before coming to United.

From this project I learned people respond to stimuli based on the totality of their human experience. The occurrences in their lives may enhance life or worsen life. We often settle in for life and that is not what God would have us do, He has promised in His Word, life more abundantly. Taking the risk to confront life and people in your life calls for us to be courageous. Joshua 1:9 says, "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." This scripture was not a reality for me before this project yet now I find hope to confront my pain.

Talking with my sister Reverend Dr. Patricia E. Dennis about this project I was shocked and a little disturbed to find out she did not feel the same way about the pain of our family beginning a new ministry that I did. Even though the response to the initial hurt was different for both of us, the resultant pain was a hindrance to the operation of God's full anointing in me. She went on to deal with prejudices and hindrances of becoming the first woman preacher in the church of God (holiness) congregation. She felt that was more hurtful to her than the pain of beginning the new ministry. The age difference and the maturity levels caused a greater awareness of the situation and "a different expression of hurt" in each of us. The evidence of the hurt that was felt was not immediately evident and the hidden hurt caused the researcher to be less confident of personal abilities and reticent when it came to showing confidence in her ability to do what God had called her to do.

We never talked about this time of transition as a family therefore the opportunity for healing could not be addressed. Many years passed before the researcher was able to "see" the hindrance. As she began writing her spiritual autobiography, the pain was so great that the matter needed to be acknowledged and addressed. Once, the hurt was acknowledged she was able to see how the pain made her feel like an outcast and the possibility of experiencing healing and restoration.

Through the research of a person like Ms. Jarena Lee, the first African American woman preacher in the AME church, who was denied the opportunity to preach from her home church pulpit, she was never acknowledged by her pastor or congregation with an ordination. She found that the pulpit was not where God ordained for her to be, she took to the streets, to homes, and to other states and proclaimed the Word of God with power

and anointing and many were saved. She was never restored by her home church, however, this summer she will be ordained by the African American Episcopal Church, conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, restoration.

Gathering data from the Bible study, reminded me of my pastor's comment Bishop Heber M. Brown, II, there may be women in that bible study refusing to acknowledge their pain because the hurt they experienced was not acceptable. Yes they may have gotten pregnant but the hypocrisy of the process made the woman come to the front of the church and ask for forgiveness. The man was never acknowledged for his part and he never felt the shame of being placed on display to be made an outcast. Some of these women today are in leadership positions in the church, they operate in ministries and they find themselves living as an outcast. These women still hold on to that hurt and refused to speak about it, because the pain is so great. It is my prayer and intention to continue to use the bible study opportunity to help women with whatever their pain maybe to acknowledged that pain and begin to move toward healing. They will find as I did the weight of that pain will begin to subside and their attitude and perspective of life will change.

There are preachers like my dad who stepped out and began a work establishing a new ministry. Some of these preachers find themselves betrayed by their previous pastor and congregation. Their families are forced to do ministry with heavy hearts, and limited to no support. What has the relationship been like with the former pastor and the congregation they left behind? The pain of some of these preachers, five years later is evident on paper, to say the least it may reach out in their preaching and interaction with the congregation because we all know the statement "hurt people hurt people."

The workshop which was conducted at the Shiloh Baptist Church of Baltimore County let me know people who are hurting are often reluctant to express their hurt. They refuse to acknowledge the cause of that hurt. Then they are not aware of what they need to be healed from the hurt in an open forum. We sit and wear our mask trying to hide behind the smile. Have you heard “smiling faces tell lies...”

Is it outside the realm of possibility that while Hagar was standing outside the camp in the wilderness by a bush she felt God had forsaken her. Is it possible that John Mark if just for a moment felt the church had forsaken him? We all have been in this place with church, family members and some friends asking the question has God forsaken me or is there a place in the church for me.

The intent of this project is to provide a road of hope, healing and restoration for the outcast. There is a need to know, as I have found out that God has not forsaken me nor will He forsake you. And it is good to know the church has room for restoration to those who have felt they are outcasts.

This process has made me sensitive to those who are hurt, by the church talk, by family gossip and by shaky friends, yet there is a new group who stand at our church doors waiting to come in to find healing and restoration. How will we respond to this potential membership?

- Those persons struggling with their sexual identify.
- Persons who are suffering from HIV/AIDS and the stigma which is still evident in the black churches.

The process to received healing must begin with:

- Acknowledging the pain.

- Journaling the pain.
- Confronting those who have hurt you.
- Embracing forgiveness.

These steps allow us to find liberty and redemption for the pain. These steps provide a platform for healing. The Bible tells us “by His stripes we are healed,” I have found through my pain not only am I healed, from my pain I choice to help others be healed.

Henri J. M. Nouwen in his book *The Wounded Healer*” tells us “liberation is called not only to care for his own wounds and the wounds of others, but also to make his wounds into a major source of his healing power.”²

This process has been life changing for me and for everyone I will touch. When I acknowledged I had been hurt, and the pain I felt was real and needed to be addressed, I could see a light at the end of the tunnel. This light did not bring me to the end of my journey; it just gave me light to continue to walk where God was leading me. M. Scott Peck has a quote which makes sense of all the pain, hurt, and disappointment in God, the church, family and friends I have experienced to get me to this moment “If we know exactly where we’re going, exactly how to get there, and exactly what we’ll see along the way, we won’t learn anything.”³

I have learned to trust God.

² Henri J. M. Nouwen, *The Wounded Healer Ministry in Contemporary Society* (New York, NY: Image Books Doubleday, 1979), 82-83.

³ M. Scott Peck, *The Road Less Traveled: A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values, and Spiritual Growth*,” accessed 4-29-2016, https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/3061.M_Scott_Peck.

What is valuable for future work?

As I continue in ministry I realized from this project there is much work to be done. What we see as persons enter our congregations on Sunday may not be the totality of what is necessary for the intervention. A deeper knowledge of the individual can always lead to a more effective ministry. Once that individual is whole the entire church benefits. It will be my aim to look beyond the obvious even if it means asking the persons what they need in order to implement an effective plan of action. When I identify a hurting person, my prayer is that the Holy Spirit will assist me in helping them find resolution, healing and restoration.

Coupled with the knowledge I gained, God's wisdom has shown me areas where I can improve. I am now more sensitive to the needs of people in the church and the need to provide relevant ministry to address even the silent needs that often go unspoken. Communication is a key to having an effective ministry. Attaining input from those receiving ministry is critical in developing effective ministries. It will therefore be my responsibility to not walk past hurting people without making an effort to communicate with them.

Because of this project, I am further challenged to preach and develop workshop to benefit the body of Christ and families in the community. The ultimate goal is to develop a handbook for persons who are hurting in order to help them in the healing process. It will be my goal to make myself available to other congregations for workshops teaching and preaching to bring the awareness of this problem to the forefront of everyone's mind, since the church wants to ignore what is going on, on the inside of the church and the people who worship there.

What would you do differently?

I would complete a systematic review of pertinent literature in order to design better materials – data gathering workshop implementation and evaluation patterns for teaching – so that efforts are more successful and need not be repeated.

I would harness additional human, literary and research resources to provide a clearer path to the work which needed to be completed. Though my peer group has been exceptional in their support and coaching and feedback, each of us could have benefited from input from other disciplines. I believe all the preaching, teaching and literature which I have received over the last three years has empowered me to minister in a more effective manner to the church and to the community.

During this process more effective time management could have diminished the stress and strain on my family and friends. The strength I received from working through this document has allowed me to begin to help others to think about and even acknowledge their pain. Even though this was a stressful time I do not regret this process because of what I have learned from it. I will never be able to thank God enough for what He has allowed me to experience in order to help someone else. The song by Mahalia Jackson is apropos for me today. The central refrain of the song says, “If I can help somebody then I know my living will not be in vain.”

APPENDIX A
PRETEST AND POSTTEST QUESTIONNAIRE

“A Model for Restoration and Healing from the Pain of an Outcast”**Pre-Test Questionnaire**

January 15, 2016

This information is to help us gather data for the ministry of the Shiloh Baptist Church of Baltimore County. This information will assist us in quantifying data which will be used for the Doctor of Ministry project for Rev. Naomi Mackall. All information will be confidential and used to assist the researcher with developing future teachings and workshops. I appreciate your cooperation. Please answer the questions as honestly as possible.

Demographics**Gender**☐ Female ☐ Male**Age of Classifications:**

- ☐ 18-24 years old
- ☐ 25-34 years old
- ☐ 35- 44 years old
- ☐ 45-54 years old
- ☐ 55-64 years old
- ☐ 65-74 years old
- ☐ 75 years or order

Ethnicity:

- ☐ White
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Native American or American Indian
- ☐ Asian / Pacific Islander
- ☐ Other

Education:

- ☐ High school graduate, diploma or the equivalent (for example: GED)
- ☐ Some college credit, no degree
- ☐ Trade/technical/ vocational training
- ☐ Associate degree
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Professional degree

_____ Doctorate degree

Household Composition:

- _____ Single, never married
 _____ Married or domestic partnership
 _____ Widowed
 _____ Divorced
 _____ Separated

Briefly explain:

Have you ever felt like an outcast (within church, family or with friends)?

_____ Yes _____ No

How has (is) your life affected by this issue?

On a scale of 1-10 how painful is this issued (10) being most painful?

How are others that you love being affected by this issue?

How is your relationship with God being affected by this issue?

Post-Test Questionnaire

Thank you for your participation in the workshop.

Please provide your feedback regarding the workshop.

Was this workshop helpful in allowing you to acknowledge you have been hurt, by a relationship within the church, family or from friends? _____ Yes _____ No

Is the person who hurt you still alive? _____ Yes _____ No

Is the pain as fresh today as the day you encountered this individual or circumstance?
 _____ Yes _____ No

Are you willing today to begin the healing process? _____ Yes _____ No

Is there anything I can do to assist you with moving forward in your healing and restoration process? (ex. Counseling, workshop, etc.) ☐ Yes ☐ No

Again thank you for your time and cooperation in this workshop today.

APPENDIX B

NOTES USED FOR WORKSHOP

SHILOH BAPTIST CHURCH OF BALTIMORE COUNTY
TITLE: CHURCH HURT
SUBTITLE: HURT FROM FAMILY AND FRIENDS
“A MODEL FOR RESTORATION AND HEALING FROM THE PAIN OF AN
OUTCAST”
 January 15, 2016

Scripture references:

Old Testament - Genesis 16:5-11

⁵ Then Sarai said to Abram, “My wrong *be* upon you! I gave my maid into your embrace; and when she saw that she had conceived, I became despised in her eyes. The LORD judge between you and me.” ⁶ So Abram said to Sarai, “Indeed your maid *is* in your hand; do to her as you please.” And when Sarai dealt harshly with her, she fled from her presence. ⁷ Now the Angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur. ⁸ And He said, “Hagar, Sarai’s maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?” She said, “I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai.” ⁹ The Angel of the LORD said to her, “Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand.” ¹⁰ Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, “I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude.” ¹¹ And the Angel of the LORD said to her: “Behold, you *are* with child, And you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, Because the LORD has heard your affliction.”¹

New Testament - Acts 15:36-41

³⁶ Then after some days Paul said to Barnabas, “Let us now go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, *and see* how they are doing.” ³⁷ Now Barnabas was determined to take with them John called Mark. ³⁸ But Paul insisted that they should not take with them the one who had departed from them in Pamphylia, and had not gone with them to the work. ³⁹ Then the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another. And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus; ⁴⁰ but Paul chose Silas and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of God. ⁴¹ And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.”²

Let’s talk

- You are not alone.
- Acknowledge the pain then push past the resistance.
- Remember God is your first responder.
- Forgive.

¹ The New King James Version (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Ge 16:5–11.

² The New King James Version (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), Ac 15:36–41.

Definition

- Restoration – the action of returning something to a former owner, place or condition.
- Pain – (noun) Physical suffering or discomfort caused by illness or injury. (verb) cause mental or physical pain to.
- Outcast – a person who has been rejected by society or a social group.
- Healing – the process of making or becoming sound or healthy again.
- Acknowledge – accept or admit the existence or truth of.

TALKING POINTS

You are not alone:

- **From our Old Testament scripture** – Hagar who was a maid servant to Sarai (Sarah) has no exact information how she became a part of the story. Yet when we look back in Genesis 12 – we see Abram and Sari go down into Egypt because there is a severe famine in the land. Abram tells Sarai because you are a beautiful woman tell and I will live because of you. Once Pharaoh saw Sarai he took her into his home and offered gifts were given to Abram – scripture says sheep, oxen, asses and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses and camels. Therefore it is believed during this time in Egypt Hagar became the property of Sarai through Abram. Between that time and the birth of Sarai's command to go with Hagar to birth a child was ten years. Once Abram did what Sarai told him to do, despite the promise which was given to Abram by God a child was born. Once this child was born Hagar was feeling like a peacock and Sarai was feeling like an outcast. How many of you know when you feel push into a wall your instinct is to survive. Well Sarai realized she was the wife of Abram so she told Abram to get rid of Hagar – Abram threw it back in Sarai's face and told her this was her maidservant she needed to handle her however, she saw fit. Once Sarai felt the pressure she put Hagar out of the camp and Hagar was not an outcast in a foreign land by the people she trusted and knew for ten years. **God had to honour His Word to Abram, therefore Hagar was rescued by a messenger of God and sent back to the camp, yet she went back with a promise.**
- **From the New Testament scripture** – Barnabas introduced Saul (Paul) brought Paul to the church in Antioch where Acts 11:26 tells us Paul and Barnabas taught the people there and this is where then name Christians was first spoken. Paul and Barnabas had a bond and their decided upon the authority of the church to go out on their first missionary journey. Barnabas had a young cousin who in my imagination thought would benefit from this experience and asked if he could go with them. There is nowhere in scripture what happened there but John Mark left

the mission. Paul and Barnabas continued without him. Now it time for the 2nd missionary journey and Barnabas wants to take John Mark. Could it be possible that John Mark was not ready for the first mission and he felt overwhelmed, intimidated, frighten, there is no scripture to solidify I am just using my own imagination. Paul the preacher, the leader of the church, the man of God, said absolutely not, he left before and we will not take him on this journey. Barnabas felt this was the right thing to do, maybe he had given John Mark some coaching, maybe he had let him lead bible study back at the home base, maybe John Mark was more mature and could handle such a journey. How would you feel if you were dismissed from preaching, teaching and journeying with your pastor because you made one mistake hummmm. To say the least John Mark did not go on this trip, but neither did Barnabas. The text tells us the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another. Hummmmm. **John Mark continued to do ministry and when we look at 2Timothy 4:11 Paul tells timothy “Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.”** Not for my ministry for the ministry.

- **Jesus – made an outcast by the world** – John 1:1 tells us “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.” John 1:11 “He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. **and his own**—“His own (people)””; for now the word is *masculine*. It means the Jews, as the “peculiar people.” Both *they* and their *land*, with all that this included, were “HIS OWN,” not so much as part of “the world which was made by Him,” but as “THE HEIR” of the inheritance (Lu 20:14; see also on Mt 22:1).³ **Jesus made an outcast by His friends** – Jesus warned Peter that he would deny Him. Peter thought this was impossible, this was his friends, his confident, his master and soon to become his Lord. How many of you know your friends may say a lot about supporting you and your ideas and ministry, yet when it comes to them and you, sometimes they have to throw you to side to save them. This is what Peter did. **The church places Jesus in a place of an outcast** – John 19:6 “When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying crucify Him, crucify Him.

Acknowledge the pain the push past the resistance.

- First you must acknowledge that you are in pain. Many times as church people we are in denial and/or we just excuse abusive behavior. Have you heard, “oh that is just how she/he is.” “Well nobody is going to do anything any way, I mean she is a leader.” “Everybody knows how she/he is.” These are statements of denial. Then there are the statements in the family “as long as I can remember

³ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*, vol. 2 (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), 128.

she/he has always acted like that.” With friendships – “well he/she is my friend; they did not mean any harm.” Yet you are suffering in silence, even crying at night, or walking the floors because of the pain you are experiencing and no way to avoid the person or the situation.

- First acknowledge that there is pain to you. Let me tell you, it may take you some time to get to this point, however, if you continue to feel this awkwardness, this twinge, this uncomfortable feelings when you are in this persons space I have a solution for you. **Whether church, family or friend relationship.** ¹⁵ Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. ¹⁶ But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. ¹⁷ And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.
- If this person does not acknowledge their wrong doing, then you need to begin your healing process. Look inside yourself and ask yourself, did I do anything to deserve this mistreatment, because it maybe you need to apologize and ask for forgiveness. If there is nothing, then I have a prescription which may help you - remember who you are and whose you are. **I Peter 2:9 tells us “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.” This should eliminate any doubt that you are not good enough, smart enough, skillful enough to complete whatever assignment God has given into your hands to do either for the church, for your family or for your friends.** God has placed you on an assignment for each of these groups, because you may be the only Bible they read and if you are charged with an assignment – you may have the gift of shepherding that does not always mean pastoring, however, it could mean to care for those who are in need of mentoring and providing spiritual direction. You may have the gift of service with ease you are not always asked or cohere to be available for whatever ministry.
- Push past the resistance – Get to the other side. We allow people, places and things to stop us from being completely whole. There are some people who want to see you suffering; they are not sure what is going on, however, it gives them great pleasure to see you struggle. You may have placed the wall up for your protection, close your eyes now and hit it with your hand, take an object and smash it, or climb it, get to the other side. Usually the persons who has hurt you has gone on with their lives and are not thinking about what they did to you. That makes life easy for them. Yet is you use PRAYER you will find an inner strength which will allow you to acknowledge the pain, even if the other person does not and then allow you to hold your head up and not be intimidated, stopped or hindered from being all God has called us to be. The Bible tells us John 10:10 –

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy;” don’t allow him to steal your confidence, kill your joy or destroy your dreams. **PUSH PAST THE RESISTANCE.**

God Is our First Responder

- **Hagar** - ⁶But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thine hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face. ⁷ And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. – **God had her answer waiting for her at the fountain.**
- **Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus** – God allowed Barnabas to take John Mark on a missionary journey and they travelled 140 miles from Syria where Paul and Silas went. **Sometimes God will allow your misfortune to be used for His glory, yet you have to be willing to go in another direction.**
- **The Thief on the Cross** – the thief and Jesus were all dying on the cross and it looked like the thief would be put to death for the crime he committed. Jesus stopped dying to assure him that that day he would be in paradise with Jesus. **Sometimes you have to acknowledge your wrong doings and allow God to provide a safe place for you to fall.**

Forgive

- After you have prayed about your hurt.
- After you have fasted about the pain.
- You must be willing to forgive even if you have not received a formal forgiveness from the person who hurt you. **Forgive – stop feeling angry or resentful toward (someone) for an offense, flaw, or mistake.** Jesus tells us to “forgive us of our debts as we forgive our debtors.” Let me assure you it may not be easy to forgive, however if you are going to move forward with integrity, honesty, and wholeness you must forgive. You are not letting the other person off the hook you are removing bitterness, anxiety, stress, pain and you are becoming whole. Just as Christ has forgiven us we must learn to forgive others. We do not understand their motives, their background or their intentions, however, when you forgive you find yourself lifting the weight off your shoulders and placing it on the shoulders of Jesus Christ. You see He had to forgive those who crucified Him, even though it was for our good.

Today if you get anything from this workshop remember:

- **You are not alone**
- **Acknowledge the pain then push past the resistance**
- **Remember God is your first responder.**

APPENDIX C
WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Women's Bible Study

March 26, 2014

April 2 2014

Held at Shiloh Baptist Church of Baltimore County

Objective: The objective of these two bible studies is to teach on the topic of “hurt” with the emphasis on family, church and friends. It is the hope of the researcher to have the women work through their pain in a safe atmosphere to begin their healing process and hopefully to be a support for other woman in the group.

Scripture Reference: Genesis 16:5-11

⁵ Then Sarai said to Abram, “My wrong *be* upon you! I gave my maid into your embrace; and when she saw that she had conceived, I became despised in her eyes. The LORD judge between you and me.”

⁶ So Abram said to Sarai, “Indeed your maid *is* in your hand; do to her as you please.” And when Sarai dealt harshly with her, she fled from her presence.

⁷ Now the Angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur. ⁸ And He said, “Hagar, Sarai’s maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?”

She said, “I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai.”

⁹ The Angel of the LORD said to her, “Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand.” ¹⁰ Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, “I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude.” ¹¹ And the Angel of the LORD said to her:

“Behold, you *are* with child,
And you shall bear a son.
You shall call his name Ishmael,
Because the LORD has heard your affliction.

Definitions:

Hurt – to cause pain or injury to (yourself, someone else, or a part of your body)
(Merriam-Webster)

Acknowledge – to say that you accept or do not deny the truth or existence of
(something). (Merriam-Webster)

Pain – the physical feeling caused by disease, injury, or something that hurts the body.
(Merriam-Webster)

Pain has both physical and emotional components. (MedicineNet.com)

<http://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=4723>

Let's talk about our scripture – we will be discussing these scripture for two weeks to help us see how our character, Hagar, was treated, how she dealt with the persons who hurt her, if she was vindicated by Sarai and Abram and was God there for her.

Process for study:

- We read the scripture out loud and I asked the women to tell me what they thought of this story.

Results:

Several of the women felt Sarai got what she asked for in letting Abram go into sleep with Hagar. Their assumptions was she was younger and was maybe in the season to conceive

Several of the woman felt Abram did not have enough compassion for Sarai's feelings.

They felt if he had reasoned with Sarai and tried to convince her what God had said about the promise none of this would have happened.

Then there was a comment Sarai was just angry because Hagar got what she could not get from her husband so Sarai was angry at Hagar and she should have been angry at Abram.

- We then discussed who Hagar was from the limited information in the Bible and also from information gathered in my research project.

Results:

The women had compassion for Hagar because she was a foreigner living in the camp with Sarai and Hagar.

The women stated even though Hagar was not of the tribe or lineage of Sarai and Abram God still had compassion on her. They felt this was a lesson in how God treats His children and those who are not members of His family.

The question was asked was the Angel Gabriel since he always seemed to be a messenger for God. I answered with, I don't know because no name or description is given.

- I provided the definitions and I asked the women to tell me something's which they have experienced that they called hurt. This was to make sure that the women not only discussed physical pain, but also any emotional pain.

Results:

This was a difficult portion of the bible study for the women. It got pretty quiet and the women did not want to share. I encouraged them that this was a safe place and they could discuss the issue without discussing names or places.

- If there was some emotional pain discussed I asked the women if they had acknowledged that pain by discussing it with the person who hurt them.

Results:

Only one woman spoke up about her mother who seemed to favor her brother over her. She stated that their relationship was closer and they were friends more than mother and son. She was upset when her mother got sick her brother did not care for her mother, she had to and her mother still favored the son and did not give any credit to the daughter for what she was doing. As she spoke she began to cry and stated she had not told anyone this story before. Her crying intensified and several of the women went over to her and hugged her and let her know it would be okay. The ladies' mother has been deceased for many, many years and she still held on to this pain and would not share even with her family how she felt. As we concluded with the 1st bible study, this woman stated she felt better since she had shared her story. I asked about forgiving her mother, even though her mother was not around, she stated "I will have to prayer over that." I encouraged her that was a good idea; she did not want to continue to go around harboring ill feelings towards her mother, especially since her mother was deceased. Well after the 2nd bible study, she stated she went home and prayed about it, and she verbally forgave her mother and she felt real good. She stated she needed to speak with her brother and try to foster a better relationship with him, since she was also harboring bad feelings towards him, even though he was not the initiative of the conflict between her and her mother. Let me say, this lady has experienced a place of an outcast because she did not get together with her brother and family members because of this tension in the family caused by the mother. She called a meeting to bring the family together to talk, only several members showed up and she was disappointed. I encouraged her at least someone showed up, to continue to invite them over for dinner, cookouts, shopping, to foster an atmosphere which everyone will feel comfortable and know this is just the beginning.

- How would they measure the pain they experienced on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest.

Results:

There were seven women who were a part of the bible study for these two weeks the results are as follows:

1 – 10
3 – 5
1 – 3
2 – 1

Responses: When asked why they selected these particular numbers the information was as follows:

- 1 – This was a very difficult time for me and the relationship I had with my mother impacting other relationships I had with my family.
- 5 – At the time the pain was really hard to comprehend, when the problem happened to me. Today, two people have resolved their differences; one person says it was a stupid argument which got out of hand so she forgot it.

- 3 – The problem I had was early in my life with a friend in school, I don't even remember all the details of what happened.
- 1 – One had a problem with her sibling, after thinking about it, it was sibling rivalry which her mom had them talk it over and today they are best friends. One did not want to discuss, she said she forgot what happened.

Thank you ladies for your participation with the bible study and providing information about your own personal pain. This information is being gathered for the purpose of research for the Doctor of Ministry project for Rev. Naomi Mackall. All information will be confidential, no names will be used, however the information will be helpful as we quantify the results for future teaching and workshops.

APPENDIX D

LETTER TO FOUNDING PASTORS

Rev. Harriett Naomi Mackall
4006 Anna Park Way
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drmack2016@aol.com

January 15, 2016

Greetings!

My name is Reverend Harriett Naomi Mackall and I am a doctoral candidate at United Theological Seminary. As a part of this matriculation I am gathering data from founding pastors regarding the church plants they have felt led to organize. My governing principle is "CHURCH HURTS! "A Model for Healing and Restoration from the Pain of an Outcast."

"I am a product of a founding pastor and I understand the dynamics of founding a church and how the process may impact your previous congregation, your family and your current parishioners. I am requesting your assistance in accumulating essential data to help complete this project. Through this process I pray this document will provide information, inspiration and motivation to pastors who have been used of God to move ministry forward.

Please know the data you provide will be published in my final document without specific reference to the responder or the relevant congregation.

Attached you will find the survey and an envelope, please put the survey in the envelope and seal it.

Sincerely,

Reverend Harriett Naomi Mackall

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